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THE BEAUFORT FAMILY AND THE WAR IN FRANCE, 1421-1450

Bristol PhD Thesis, 1982

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M. K. Jones.

9th September 1982

SYNOPSIS

The subject of this thesis is the involvement of the second generation of the Beaufort family in the war in France. It is a consideration of family fortunes from the battle of Baugé in March 1421 to the final loss of Normandy in August 1450, with special reference to war service, the difficulties sustained by captivity and ransom and the incentive provided by royal patronage. Its aim is to provide a detailed reconstruction of the commitment of the Beauforts to the war and the opportunities for profit and advancement that it allowed. It is also to re-examine the military failure and disgrace that was dramatically to over-shadow the family.

As aristocrats of the royal blood, the participation of the Beauforts in the war against France was not in itself surprising. What was unusual was the degree of their commitment. The family was particularly unfortunate in that the two elder Beaufort brothers were captured after the disastrous defeat at Baugé. This blow was to be redeemed by the generous patronage of the young Henry VI, which provided military command and major territorial acquisitions. Landed estate was a particularly sensitive issue to the Beauforts, for as legitimised bastard offspring of John of Gaunt they lacked a substantial patrimony in England. The family was ambitious, and major donations in France were to give them an immense stake in maintaining the conquest of Henry V and Bedford. No more was this so than with the youngest brother, Edmund, who was to acquire estates in Normandy and Maine worthy of a prince, a striking contrast to his lack of landed wealth in England. Yet their elevation to military high command resulted in damaging military failure and

accusations of corruption and mismanagement. John duke of Somerset was to return home in disgrace after an ineffective campaign in 1443. His brother Edmund met with further misfortune, presiding over the calamitous loss of Normandy to the French. Although the king retained his trust in him, his reputation was irreparably tarnished; the charge of corrupt, even treasonable, conduct was to be championed by his political rival Richard duke of York.

The intention of this study is a thorough examination of the controversial set-backs and defeats that destroyed the Beauforts' reputation. The emphasis is firmly on the matters of importance to the family itself: their position in England, the complicated ransom negotiations, their record of war service and, most importantly, the offices and lands granted to them in France.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes. Full details of the works cited below and of other books or articles cited by short titles will be found in the Bibliography.

ADC	Archives Départementales du Calvados
ADE	Archives Départementales de l'Eure
ADM	Archives Départementales de la Manche
ADN	Archives Départementales du Nord
ADO	Archives Départementales de l'Orne
ADS	Archives Départementales de la Sarthe
ADSM	Archives Départementales de la Seine-Maritime
AN	Archives Nationales
<u>BIHR</u>	<u>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</u>
<u>BJRL</u>	<u>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</u>
<u>Blondel</u>	R. Blondel, 'De Reductione Normanniae', in <u>Oeuvres de Robert Blondel</u> , II, ed. A. Héron
BL	British Library.
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale
<u>CChR</u>	<u>Calendar of Charter Rolls</u>
<u>CCR</u>	<u>Calendar of Close Rolls</u>
<u>Calendar of French Rolls</u>	<u>Reports of the Deputy Keeper</u> , XLVIII, 217-450
<u>Calendar of Norman Rolls</u>	<u>Reports of the Deputy Keeper</u> , XLI, 671-810; XLII, 313-472
<u>CP</u>	<u>The Complete Peerage</u>
<u>CPR</u>	<u>Calendar of Patent Rolls</u>
<u>ECHR</u>	<u>Economic History Review</u>
EETS	Early English Text Society
<u>EHR</u>	<u>English Historical Review</u>
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<u>PPC</u>	<u>Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council</u>
PRO	Public Record Office
<u>RP</u>	<u>Rotuli Parliamentorum</u>
RS	Rolls Series
<u>Rymer</u>	Rymer, T., <u>Foedera</u>
<u>TRHS</u>	<u>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</u>
WAM	Westminster Abbey Muniments

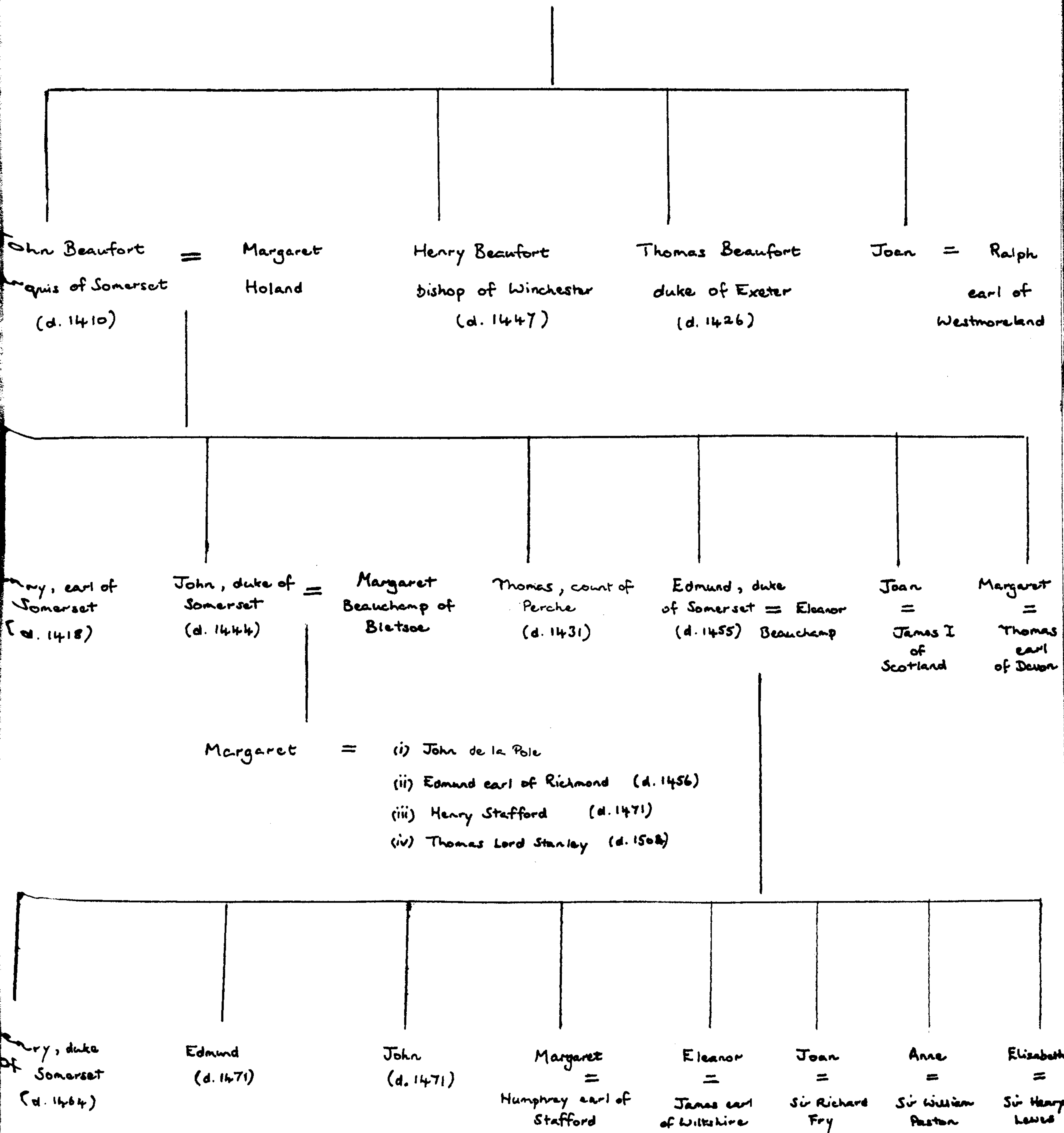
NOTES

In the complex matter of currency, the most common money of account in English-occupied France were the pounds, shillings and pence of Tours. The value of the pound of Tours (livre tournois) in relation to pounds sterling was to vary during the first half of the fifteenth century, but a useful approximation is nine livres tournois to the English pound. The pound of Tours was four-fifths of the value of the more rarely used pound of Paris (livre parisien). The value of the gold coins the écus and salus was also to fluctuate, but the standard approximation was two écus (or salus) to the English noble (6s 8d).

Place-names have been modernised whenever possible but extracts from documents quoted in the text have been retained in their original form.

THE BEAUFORT FAMILY IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

John of Gaunt = (iii) Catherine Swynford



CHAPTER ONE The English Background

The Beaufort family, the illegitimate offspring of John of Gaunt, occupied a central position in Lancastrian politics. In part this was a reflection of their dynastic position. They had been legitimated in 1397, and although Henry IV had debarred them from the royal succession in 1407, such an act was not, in legal terms, conclusive. This rather ambiguous status of the family among those of the royal blood was not a provocative issue while the king's own sons were in such plentiful supply. In the uncertain atmosphere that surrounded Henry VI's majority, given the lack of children of Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, the heir presumptive, or the king himself (until the birth of Edward in 1453) the question of succession became far more important.⁽¹⁾ Whatever the complexities of this dynastic issue, the closeness of the Beaufort family to the royal house ensured them a prominent place both in domestic and foreign affairs, further strengthened by the marriage of Margaret Holand, widow of John Beaufort earl of Somerset, to Thomas duke of Clarence in 1410.⁽²⁾

John, earl of Somerset, had been one of Henry IV's most trusted councillors and his brothers, Henry and Thomas, were both to play a major part in the conquest of Normandy undertaken by Henry V. Henry, bishop of Winchester, the chancellor, contributed large loans to the expedition to France, while Thomas, earl of Dorset and later duke

(1) This subject is more fully discussed by R.A. Griffiths, 'The sense of dynasty in the reign of Henry VI', in Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England, ed. C.D. Ross (Gloucester, 1979), 19-21.

(2) CP, XII, i, 44. It was Clarence who took custody of the Beaufort lands during the minority of the heirs Henry (d. 1418) and John.

of Exeter, was one of the principal commanders of the Lancastrian war effort.⁽¹⁾ The special trust that Henry V had in Thomas was reflected in his appointment of the duke as guardian of his heir in his last will.⁽²⁾ Henry, who finally succeeded in his ambition to be elevated to cardinal in 1427, was to become one of the principal councillors of Henry VI, apart from a brief loss of influence between 1426 and 1429 and the lack of activity during the last few years of his life.⁽³⁾ The prominence enjoyed by Cardinal Beaufort was a product of the remarkable series of loans made to the crown, his influence as chief feoffee of the Duchy of Lancaster and his abilities as a diplomat and statesman. His powerful position provoked a long-running feud between him and Humphrey duke of Gloucester, but Beaufort was to gain the trust and confidence of Henry VI in a way never matched by

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- (1) Thomas Beaufort was created duke of Exeter on 18 November 1416, on his return from campaigning in France: J. Enoch Powell and K. Wallis, The House of Lords in the Middle Ages (1968), 447-8.
- (2) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI (1981), 29, though he indicates that the duke can have had little contact with the king, for he returned to campaign in France in 1423 and died in 1426 (ibid., 37, n.37).
- (3) The cardinal's attendances at council became more infrequent after 1443. By this stage his nephew Edmund Beaufort was attending council meetings, and was to become an active member from late in 1445. After his return from France in 1450 he became the principal councillor until the king's breakdown in 1453: A.L. Brown, 'The king's councillors in fifteenth-century England', TRHS, 5th series, XIX (1969), 109-13. The last two years of the cardinal's life (1445-7) were spent in retirement, much of which was passed at lodgings at the Priory of Canterbury. The records of the Dean and Chapter contain many references to the activities of the Beaufort household and show that the Prior travelled to Winchester to attend the cardinal's funeral (11 April 1447): C. Woodruff, 'Notes on the inner life and domestic economy of the Priory of Christ Church, Canterbury, in the fifteenth century', Archaeologia Cantiana, LIII (1940), 5, 8-10; Records of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, Miscellaneous Acts IV, ff. 42-45, 93-95^v, 141^v-144. I am grateful to Mrs. J. Lloyd for drawing my attention to these references.

Gloucester, who was to suffer a growing exclusion from decisions of major policy.⁽¹⁾ The empathy between Beaufort and the king in the vital area of diplomacy and foreign affairs was to ensure an important role for the second generation of the family, whose position was undeniably strengthened through the influence of the cardinal.⁽²⁾

If the Beaufort family was to assume a major part in the government of the realm it was only proper that they should enjoy a landed estate to match such a measure of responsibility. The establishment and development of their territorial patrimony was a sensitive matter for the Beauforts, and naturally of vital concern to them. The family was to build up their property through a variety of means, purchase, royal grant and marriage.⁽³⁾ Such an accumulation

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- (1) R.L. Virgoe, 'The composition of the king's council, 1437-61', BIHR, XLIII (1970), 141-44.
- (2) For the observation that in his later years the cardinal employed his wealth to establish his nephews in the forefront of the English nobility, see G.L. Harriss, 'Cardinal Beaufort - patriot or usurer?', TRHS, 5th series, XX (1970), 146.
- (3) A limited account of the Beaufort lands, based solely on the evidence of inquisitions post mortem, is provided by A.J. Elder, 'A study of the Beauforts and their estates, 1399-1450' (Bryn Mawr PhD thesis, 1964). A wider and more comprehensive survey is in A. Marshall, 'The role of the English War Captains in England and Normandy, 1436-61' (Wales MA thesis, 1975), 206-24 (Appendix 1: The lands and income of the Beaufort brothers), to which frequent reference will be made. However this analysis, while drawing on a number of ministers' accounts, does not make use of the principal source for the Beaufort lands, the receiver-general's account for Thomas, duke of Clarence, 1418-22 (WAM, 12163). Clarence had been granted custody of the Beaufort inheritance during the minority of the heir; the lands were administered separately from the duke's own estates, and the account provides the only comprehensive picture of the income received from these properties. As a result, Marshall considerably underestimates the value of these lands (thesis cit., 224). For a general discussion of the weaknesses of inquisitions post mortem as a source for baronial income see T.B. Pugh and C.D. Ross, 'Some materials for the study of baronial incomes in the fifteenth century, ECHR, 2nd series, VI (1953), 186-9.

of lands was both accepted and welcomed by contemporaries in the early Lancastrian period; indeed the parliament of Henry IV had petitioned that the Beauforts be better endowed.⁽¹⁾ It was a sign of the political tension and uncertainty of the reign of Henry VI that the access to royal patronage enjoyed by the second generation of the family became increasingly distrusted and resented by other members of the nobility.⁽²⁾

The landed estate of the Beaufort family was founded on the purchase of a number of . . . manors in Somerset by John of Gaunt, for his bastard son John, in 1394. William Montague, earl of Salisbury, was paid 5,000 marks for the manors of Martock and Curry Rivel and their appurtenances.⁽³⁾ Both Martock and Curry Rivel (which included in its administration the manors of Langport Eastover and Langport Westover and the hundreds of Abdick and Bulston) were wealthy manors; further Somerset property (the manors of Kingsbury Regis, Queen Camel and Tidhurst) descended to John Beaufort's wife, Margaret Holand, as one of the co-heirs of Edmund earl of Kent.⁽⁴⁾ These lands were to form the nucleus of Beaufort influence in the west country; further property acquired by Margaret in the extinction of the earldom of Kent in 1408 was concentrated for the most part in the Midlands, in

(1) B.P. Wolffe, The Royal Demesne in English History (1971), 80.

(2) Ibid, 120-1.

(3) Marshall, thesis cit, 212-13.

(4) Ibid. The fullest evaluations of these Somerset properties, the receiver-general's account for the duke of Clarence and the receiver's accounts for those of the Beaufort lands in the 'southparts' of the administration of the duchy of Lancaster (1455-56), indicate an annual income from these manors and farms of slightly over £400. Local receiver's accounts survive only for Curry Rivel. Martock was a particularly wealthy manor with a yearly return of around £175 (WAM, 12163, ff.5-6^v; PRO, DL 29/651/10534; Devon RO, M39-41).

Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire.⁽¹⁾ The family's influence was extended by a number of grants made by Henry IV, including the manors of Sampford Peverell and Aller Peverell in Devonshire and the forfeited Welsh lands of Owain Glendower (1401), an annuity of £1,000 per annum to support John Beaufort's estate as earl of Somerset (1404), until lands of a similar value were granted to him, and the castle and lordship of Corfe in Dorset (1410).⁽²⁾

(1) Marshall, thesis cit., 210-11.

(2) The Devon manors had come into the king's hands through the death of Sir William Asthorp and were worth around £80 a year (CPR, 1399-1401, 454; CPR, 1401-5, 17; WAM, 12163, f.5^v). The Welsh lands forfeited by Owain Glendower included the lordships of Cynailleth Owain and Glyn Dyfrdwy in Merioneth and Iscoed and Gwynionydd in Cardiganshire. Their potential value was around 200 marks a year but the estates had suffered severely from the damage of the war and took many years to recover. Under Beaufort administration the manors in north Wales were leased out to individual farmers, those of south Wales supervised by their receiver there, Rhys Ap Thomas. The annual return from these properties in 1420 was no more than £29 though by the mid-fifteenth century they seem to have recovered much more of their value: CPR, 1401-5, 17; WAM, 12163, f.8^v; Marshall, thesis cit., 215; R.S. Thomas, 'The political career, estates and "connection" of Jasper Tudor, earl of Pembroke and duke of Bedford (d. 1495)' (Wales PhD thesis, 1971), 113. The annuity of £1,000 per annum was granted to John earl of Somerset and his heirs male on 12 November 1404, to be held at the exchequer until the king provided him with lands of that value. This charge was altered on 25 October 1409, when £500 of the sum was re-assigned to the petty custom of the port of London. This annuity was to form a major part of the Beaufort inheritance. It descended to John II earl of Somerset, bar the dower portion of his mother Margaret (250 marks from the exchequer, 250 marks from the petty custom of London) and after his death the full sum passed to his brother Edmund: CPR, 1401-5, 477; CPR, 1408-13, 142; WAM, 12163, f.9; Calendar of Chancery Inquisitions Post Mortem, IV, 201, 218, 268. The account of the descent of this annuity by Marshall (thesis cit., 211) is largely inaccurate. The castle and lordship of Corfe, although a prestigious family seat, yielded a nominal income, some £7 a year (WAM, 12163, f.5^v; Marshall, thesis cit., 208).

Thus by the death of John, earl of Somerset, in 1410 the family had already accumulated a relatively substantial landed estate. Principal residences included the former royal castle at Corfe and palace at Woking, a house on the river in Westminster, 'Le Ryall', another at Curry Rivel, and Maxey castle in Lincolnshire.⁽¹⁾ The last came to be particularly favoured by Margaret, duchess of Clarence and the Beauforts' French prisoner, the count of Angoulême, was to spend much of his long captivity here.⁽²⁾ These lands were able to yield an annual income of over £1,300, in addition to the considerable annuities the family received.⁽³⁾

After the death of the duke of Clarence and the capture of the young heir John Beaufort, earl of Somerset, at Baugé the crown took over the custody of the majority of the estate until John's proof of age was delivered, on 24 September 1425.⁽⁴⁾ During the earl's long imprisonment his properties were managed by his receiver-general, Thomas Sutton, their

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- (1) Considerable repair work was underway at the former royal palace at Woking in 1420-1, including the construction of a number of new buildings, on which £247 10s 2d was spent (WAM, 12163, ff.6, 20^v).
- (2) The Beauforts also held the manor of Maxey in Northamptonshire; there was, however, no castle on this site. The castle of Maxey was situated a few miles south of the Beaufort manor of West Deeping in Lincolnshire. It was the centre of the administration of the family's midland estates, and sums from local receivers were frequently delivered here (PRO, SC6/908/11). The castle was in ruins when the antiquarian John Leland visited the site in the sixteenth century (Leland, Itinerary, v, 32).
- (3) The total income from the Beaufort lands, excluding the revenue from the lordships of Glendower in Wales, was £1,414 14s 1d in 1419-20, £1,318 13s 1d in 1420-1. Some £40 of annuities were charged on this income (WAM, 12163, ff.4, 6^v, 10^v).
- (4) CCR, 1422-29, 230-1.

administration often overlapping with that of the dower portion held by John's mother, Margaret duchess of Clarence.⁽¹⁾ The only serious legal dispute to trouble his officers concerned a claim by John Scudamore to the Welsh lands formerly held by Owain Glendower, but this was dealt with effectively enough.⁽²⁾ Together with his income from annuities the earl's resources were reasonably substantial and enabled him to make a number of important loans to the crown, through his attorneys, despite his own captivity.⁽³⁾ As such, his estate was grossly undervalued in the income tax returns of 1436, which assessed his total income, including annuities, as only £1,000.⁽⁴⁾

The earl's lengthy term of imprisonment finally ended in the summer of 1438, and the death of his mother not long after his release

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- (1) On some manors (e.g. Eydon and Overstone in Northamptonshire) the steward simply accounted for the total and then Somerset's receiver-general, Thomas Sutton, apportioned Margaret's dower sum. In others (Curry Rivel) a separate account was delivered to Margaret's own receiver-general, John Martyn (PRO, SC6/947/17; Devon RO, M41).
 - (2) In the parliament of 1433 John Beaufort petitioned against the claim made on the Welsh lordships by John Scudamore, who had married Glendower's daughter Alice. Somerset's own rights were safeguarded but his brother Edmund was to secure Scudamore's dismissal from royal service based on an old statute made at the time of Glendower's revolt, and took over his constablenesship of Camarthen: RP, IV, 440; R. Somerville, History of the Duchy of Lancaster (1933), 647.
 - (3) These included a loan of £1,333 6s 8d on 21 May 1435 and another of £4,000 on 15 March 1436: A. Steel, The Receipt of the Exchequer, 1388-1485 (Cambridge, 1954), 207-8. John's landed resources were further strengthened by his inheritance of the properties of his uncle, Thomas duke of Exeter, in 1427, principally in Yorkshire and Bedfordshire (CFR, 1422-30, 176-7).
 - (4) In this survey Somerset's estimated income of £1,000 was largely derived from his annuities at the exchequer and port of London: H.L. Gray, 'Incomes from land in England in 1436', EHR, XLIX (1934), 615. For a general criticism of the reliability of these figures see T.B. Pugh and C.D. Ross, 'The English baronage and the income tax of 1436', BIHR, XXVI (1953), 1-28.

(30 December 1439) allowed John possession of the whole of the family estates. This was delayed by his return to Normandy with a new army in January 1440, and did not take place until after his return at the end of the year.⁽¹⁾ The earl's arrival in his manor of Deeping was recorded by the chronicler of the nearby abbey of Croyland, who attributed to it a revival of the dispute concerning grazing rights in the marshland. Faced with threats from Somerset's tenants, the abbot was finally forced to journey to Corfe in the summer of 1443, to seek an interview with the newly created duke. Somerset, in the midst of preparations for his ill-fated expedition to France, agreed to a stay in the proceedings until his return.⁽²⁾

Deeping, and nearby Beaufort properties in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire, along with Martock, Curry Rivel and the other manors in Somerset and east Devon, formed the nucleus of the earl's estate, where he was often in residence.⁽³⁾ They were centres of the family's wealth and influence and a number of men from these localities were to join Somerset in crossing to France in 1440 and 1443.⁽⁴⁾ However John's

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- (1) As Somerset was to relate in a petition to the crown concerning his inheritance, '... as soon as he was delivered from captivity, was sent again to France and made no delay, though the said duchess died before his departure' (CPR, 1436-41, 515).
- (2) Ingulph's Continuation of the History of Croyland, ed. H.T. Riley (1854), 389-9, although the chronicle does not give the date of Somerset's visit. The earl was in the area on 27 January 1442, when he made a grant of land in Deeping St. James (Northamptonshire RO, FitzWilliam Charters, 1777). Beaufort property in West Deeping, Market Deeping, Deeping St. James and the 'southparts' of the marshland yielded an annual revenue of over £200 (WAM 12163, ff.5-6^v).
- (3) For a reference to Somerset at his castle of Sherborne, near Langport, see Official correspondence of Thomas Bekynton, ed. G. Williams (Rolls Series, in 2 vols., 1872), i, 160.
- (4) Hugh Keene, an official of the earl from Martock, crossed with his army to France in January 1440 (Calendar of French Rolls, 333). A number of midlands families were represented in the expedition of 1443, including the Wakes (Northamptonshire), Bellers and Digby (Leicestershire). However those in the army with some territorial connection with Somerset were only a small minority, see Marshall, thesis cit., 133-40.

seventeen year captivity had given him little opportunity to extend these connections. He was not able to marry until 1442, and his wife, Margaret, daughter of Sir John Beauchamp of Bletsoe, proved a modest match that added little to his inheritance; a marked contrast to the substantial lands realised through the marriages of his father and younger brother.⁽¹⁾ Without an heir until the birth of a daughter Margaret on 31 May 1443, a very real uncertainty hung over the future of Somerset's landed wealth; a factor revealed in the hard bargaining with the crown before the French expedition of 1443, which was given an added urgency by John's ill-health.⁽²⁾

One of the demands made by Somerset in the course of these negotiations was to be promoted to duke before his departure to France, and to be granted an estate worth 1,000 marks a year to support that dignity.⁽³⁾ The king allowed Somerset lands of a value of 600 marks a year, to him and his heirs male, including the major portion of the barony of Kendal and the manors of Bassingbourn and Babraham in Cambridgeshire, formerly held by the duke of Bedford.⁽⁴⁾ John was able to select these lands himself from the royal demesne, and was also to

(1) John had married by July 1442 (Calendar of Papal Registers, IX, 368). Margaret's cousin Sir John Stourton, acted as feoffee-to-use to the couple of a number of occasions during their short marriage (Marshall, thesis cit., 125-6).

(2) For a general discussion of these negotiations with the crown, see M. Jones, 'John Beaufort, duke of Somerset, and the French expedition of 1443', in Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England, ed. R.A. Griffiths (Gloucester, 1981), 86-91.

(3) Ibid., 89-90.

(4) Ibid.; B.P. Wolffe, The Royal Demesne, 121.

receive the title of earl of Kendal.⁽¹⁾ This remarkable access to royal patronage resulted in a considerable extension of the Beaufort patrimony. On the death of the duke of Somerset on 27 May 1444, the majority of the family's estates descended to his daughter; an interest that prompted the earl of Suffolk to secure the ward and marriage of Margaret for his son John de la Pole.⁽²⁾

The importance attached by John Beaufort to the extension of his landed estate was all the more understandable in view of the considerable arrears of his annuities, a major part of his inheritance, that had built up during his long imprisonment in France. These concerned the annual pension of 500 marks, from the exchequer, that had been due from the earl's coming of age in 1425.⁽³⁾ Many of these payments had not even been issued, and at the time of John's release he was owed no less than £4,824 6s 8d. Discussions over the repayment of this large sum were underway before his embarkation for France in January 1440, though arrangements for clearing the debt were not to take place until the summer of 1441. On 29 May 1441, £2,500 of these arrears were rebated,

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- (1) PPC, V, 281, 288. He was formally created earl of Kendal on 28 August 1443 (CChR, vi, 37). Somerset's possession was limited by the dower portion of the barony held by Jacquetta of Luxembourg. Shortly before embarking for France in 1443, John entrusted the majority of his properties to a receiver-general, John Eltonhede, but Kendal was to be administered separately (PRO, E159/127; K.R., Recorda, Michaelmas, m.14).
- (2) One of the charges later laid against Suffolk was that he had enriched himself at the king's expense by securing the Beaufort inheritance (HMC, Third Report, 280). The marriage was later annulled, allowing Margaret to marry Edmund Tudor, earl of Richmond: C.H. Cooper, The Lady Margaret (Cambridge, 1874), 3-8. The barony of Kendal, which had reverted to the crown, barring the dower portion of the duchess of Somerset, on John Beaufort's death, was regranted to Edmund Tudor on 24 March 1453 (R.S. Thomas, thesis cit., 45).
- (3) The pension was payable from 24 September 1425 (CCR, 1422-9, 230-1).

along with £1,500 of returned tallies, from the sum (£8,000) that Somerset had owed the crown in the purchasing of the count of Eu, to secure his release from captivity.⁽¹⁾ Tallies were assigned for a further 1,000 marks, from the annuities due to the earl, on 2 June 1441.⁽²⁾ The remainder of the debt (£1,657 3s 4d) was not paid up. Somerset was to sue for the sum outstanding before the expedition of 1443, but no provision for repayment had been made before his death in May 1444.⁽³⁾

Securing a full return of these annuities, a substantial part of the Beaufort inheritance, was naturally of great importance to Somerset. In a petition to the English council in December 1439, he stressed the charges made on him by his considerable ransom, requesting that because his proof of age had been delivered late a further 500 marks was also outstanding, from the term of Easter 1425.⁽⁴⁾ A captain about to cross to France had priority at the exchequer for debts due to him as a private individual, but in his case there were considerable technical difficulties against securing such a repayment. This 500 marks was still outstanding, along with the remainder of the annuities owed by the crown, when Somerset again petitioned for the arrears, on 12 September 1442, in the course of the negotiations concerning his next expedition to France.⁽⁵⁾

In the interim, Somerset made what arrangements he could to ensure full payment of the pension. He appointed a receiver at the port of

(1) PRO, E403/742 (29 May 1441); E401/774 (29 May 1441).

(2) PRO, E403/742 (2 June 1441); E401/774 (2 June 1441).

(3) PRO, C47/26/28, article 18.

(4) PPC, V, 112-13.

(5) PRO, E404/59/103.

London, the customs official Hugh Dyke, and granted him £50 a year from the proceeds of this half of the annuity, assigned on the petty custom of London.⁽¹⁾ Cash payments were received regularly from this source and were either collected by Dyke or Somerset himself.⁽²⁾ However, the fact that a considerable sum was still due from the exchequer must have contributed to the careful financial arrangements proposed in John's articles of war-service in 1443.⁽³⁾

The realisation and extension of his inheritance was of vital importance to John Beaufort. His younger brother Edmund held far less property in England. His landed endowment had come through his marriage to Eleanor, the youngest daughter of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. Edmund, in frequent attendance at court, had previously been close to a match with the widowed Queen Catherine, but such a union had been strongly opposed by Gloucester and the other lords of the council.⁽⁴⁾ However, his marriage to Eleanor, which had taken place by November 1434, brought a substantial propertied interest. Eleanor Beauchamp was the youngest of the three family dowagers, but also the richest; the marriage placed a substantial share of the estates of her late husband, Thomas Lord Roos, at Edmund's disposal.⁽⁵⁾ These lands,

(1) PRO, E159/217, K.R., Recorda, Hilary, m.14.

(2) PRO, E122/74/23 (subsidiary accounts of the petty custom of London concerning payments to John Beaufort, earl of Somerset).

(3) See M. Jones, loc. cit., 88-91.

(4) Incerti Scriptoris Chronicon Angliae de Regnis Henrici IV, Henrici V et Henrici VI, ed. J. Giles (1848), iv, 17.

(5) Pugh and Ross, 'Baronial incomes', 24-25. Edmund and Eleanor had received licence to marry in November 1434 (Calendar of Papal Registers, VIII, 514, 515).

principally in Norfolk, Lincolnshire and Kent, were assessed at an annual value of £205 in the tax survey of 1436; as such they formed Edmund's only source of income.⁽¹⁾

The match meant that Edmund was to take over the protection of the young heir to the lordship of Roos, Thomas, and the two younger children Richard and Margaret.⁽²⁾ It also developed a strong connection with John, Lord Talbot, who had married Eleanor's older sister Margaret. The two brothers-in-law shared a strong interest through their wives' rights to the Beauchamp properties. Both were involved in a dispute with the Berkeleys over the Lisle portion of the inheritance and an anxious Norman council relayed their threat to abandon the siege of Harfleur if the assize were held during their absence from England.⁽³⁾

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- (1) PRO, E163/7/31/2, m.1: a valor of the lands of Edmund count of Mortain and his wife in 1436; Gray, 'Incomes from land', 618; Marshall, thesis cit., 219-23. It is possible that the Beaufort properties in Kent brought Edmund into contact with Richard Frogenhall of Teynham, who was later to become one of his most trusted servants.
- (2) The closeness of the Beaufort and Roos families prompted E. Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Poet (1961), 212-15, to suggest Edmund Beaufort as the subject of the poem 'The Black Knight', soon after his successful relief of Calais in 1436. This possibility is strengthened through evidence of the ownership of copies of this poem, one, John Kyriell, acting as servant and receiver of Edmund 1448-50.
- (3) The action was taken by Edmund, earl of Dorset, and Eleanor his wife, John Lord Talbot, and his wife Margaret, and George Neville and his wife Elizabeth against James Berkeley over the Gloucestershire properties of Wotton-under-Edge, Cam and Slimbridge. The dispute arose from the partition of the Beauchamp and Lisle inheritance after the death of Richard, earl of Warwick. Both Dorset and Talbot had petitioned the English council soon after Warwick had died that their duties in France prevented them from attending to this matter of their inheritance, and that the hearing of their dispute with Berkeley be postponed (PRO, E28/60, 25 May 1439). In the interim Dorset appointed attorneys to handle the proceedings (Calendar of French Rolls, 337, 2 August 1439). On 12 August 1440 the king was informed by the Norman council that if the assize was held Dorset and Talbot would raise the siege of Harfleur, which would be to the great cost of the duchy (CCR, 1435-41, 325). An arbitration award was finally accepted in February 1441 by Dorset, but Talbot continued to dispute the settlement and finally occupied Wotton-under-Edge by force:

A close co-operation existed between the two men, one that was noted by contemporaries in France. The pursuit of his wife's territorial interests was always of high importance to Edmund; it was a vigilance that was later to contribute to his confrontation with Richard Neville, earl of Warwick.⁽¹⁾

The fact that Edmund Beaufort held no English estates in his own right was to become a sensitive issue as he rose higher in royal favour. He had been appointed constable of Camarthen castle (1433), Aberystwyth (1435) and Windsor (1438), and had a good record of war service in France, particularly for the relief of Calais in 1436.⁽²⁾ Yet his lack of a more substantial landed endowment may well have been the reason for the long delay between his promotion to earl of Dorset (circa March 1438) and the formal confirmation of the dignity, which did not take place until 28 August 1442. In the interim Edmund's income was buttressed by a number of substantial annuities. The first, granted on 29 January 1440, was a life pension of 500 marks, formerly the dower of his mother the duchess

A.J. Pollard, 'The family of Talbot, Lords Talbot and Earls of Shrewsbury in the fifteenth century' (Bristol PhD thesis, 1968), 43-51.

- (1) R.L. Storey, The End of the House of Lancaster (1966), 143-5, 231-41. The strong bond that existed between Edmund Beaufort and Talbot through their marriages to the Beauchamp sisters was commented on by Cardinot Roque, a native of Rouen, in 1449, who remarked tellingly that because of this the two always worked in close partnership: Histoire des règnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI par Thomas Basin, ed. J. Quicherat (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 4 vols, 1855-9), iv, 314.
- (2) Edmund was also steward of the duchy of Lancaster lordships of Kidwelly (Camarthenshire), Monmouth and the Three Castles (Grosmont, Skenfrith and White Castle) in Gwent (Somerville, The Duchy of Lancaster, 640, 647, 649). All these offices were confirmed for life between April and July 1438.
- (3) CCR, 1441-7, 83. Edmund's promotion in 1438 would have been on the oral authority of the king himself, but such a long delay before the honour was formally confirmed by letters patent was certainly unusual.

of Clarence.⁽¹⁾ There was to follow a considerable annuity of £442 6s 8d, given on 13 March 1442, until such time as the king provided him with lands and property of the same yearly amount.⁽²⁾ After Edmund's promotion, first to earl and then marquis of Dorset, another pension was granted, the yearly sum of £224 6s 8d, from the issues of the great sessions of Carmarthen and Cardigan (1 December 1443), again until the king endowed him with lands of the same value, 'in consideration of his being a younger brother and inheriting nothing at the death of his ancestors'.⁽³⁾ Finally Edmund was to inherit a further £1,000 from the annuities formerly held by his brother John, duke of Somerset, £500 from the exchequer and £500 from the petty custom of London.⁽⁴⁾

Thus by inheritance and royal grant, Edmund had received a series of pensions totalling in all slightly over £1,834. They represented an important but also vulnerable source of income. Of the two annuities granted by the crown in place of a landed endowment, the first (£442 6s 8d) received priority of assignment at the exchequer and any returned tallies were re-assigned promptly.⁽⁵⁾ The second (£224 6s 8d), charged on the issues of Carmarthen and Cardigan, represented a hazardous and

(1) CPR, 1436-41, 375. An annual grant made to Edmund Beaufort as constable of Windsor castle of £500 (23 August 1439) was for necessary repairs to the castle and lordship and was not a pension: CPR, 1436-41, 443; S. Bond, 'The medieval constable of Windsor Castle', *EHR*, LXXXII (1967), 235. Edmund had been appointed constable for life on 21 July 1438 (CPR, 1436-41, 188).

(2) CPR, 1441-6, 54.

(3) CPR, 1441-6, 277.

(4) CCR, 1441-7, 243-4.

(5) PRO, E403/745 (11 May, 24 June 1442), /747 (28 November 1442), /751 (20 February 1444), /753 (22 July 1444), /755 (9 November 1444, 1 March 1445).

problematic source of income and Edmund was to experience great difficulty in getting payment.⁽¹⁾ He was also to experience a frustrating delay before he took over the majority of his brother's annuities, which he only began to receive from Easter 1446, some two years after John's death.⁽²⁾ If Edmund was to suffer far less from losses transmitted by bad tallies than Richard duke of York, his financial position was also inherently far more insecure.⁽³⁾

Edmund Beaufort's need of a more substantial landed estate was underlined by the division of property at his brother's death, nearly all of which passed to John's widow and to his daughter Margaret.⁽⁴⁾ Finally, on 4 October 1444 the king granted him a valuable parcel of lands in Somerset and Dorset known as the 'Gournay manors', together with the Richmond lands of Bassingbourn and Babraham. In return, Edmund was to surrender £417 14s from his earlier annuity of £442 6s 8d.⁽⁵⁾ These 'Gournay lands', formerly held by Sir John Tiptoft, with their seat at the castle of Stoke sub Hamdon, represented a major addition to Edmund's

(1) PRO, E159/222, K.R., Recorda, Trinity, m.3; R.A. Griffiths, 'Royal government in the southern counties of the principality of Wales, 1422-85' (Bristol PhD thesis, 1962), 430.

(2) It was granted to Edmund, marquis of Dorset, that he have livery of the possessions of the late duke of Somerset 'which have descended to him and will be for a long time out of his possession, so that he cannot prove his title', on 24 October 1444 (CPR, 1441-6, 311). The succession to this annuity was of obvious importance to Edmund, and his servant Richard Frogenhall conducted the inquisition in Middlesex. However his seisin of the pension was delayed until Easter 1446 (PRO, E159/222, K.R., Recorda, Michaelmas, m.7; E404/62/91, CCR 1441-7, 324-5).

(3) For a comparison of the sums owed by the exchequer to York and Somerset, see A. Steel, The Receipt of the Exchequer, 259.

(4) Through the settlement of John's estate, Edmund received the castle and lordship of Corfe and the manors of Woking and Sutton (Marshall, thesis cit., 206-15).

(5) CPR, 1441-6, 324.

estate.⁽¹⁾ However his right of title was complicated by the fact that in 1421, during Tiptoft's tenure, the crown had obtained a reversionary interest in the lands in favour of the duchy of Cornwall, and the manors had in fact passed to the duchy for a short period between the death of Tiptoft (31 January 1443) and the grant to Edmund.⁽²⁾ Edmund sought the authority of parliament to protect his own right to the lands in 1446, but even after this encountered local opposition from a number of the feoffees who refused to surrender deeds and other evidences.⁽³⁾

Edmund's estates were substantially enlarged by the lands he inherited from his uncle, Cardinal Beaufort, principally the lordship of Chirk and Chirklands in North Wales and the manor of Canford in Dorset.⁽⁴⁾ These properties provided Edmund with a stronger territorial base in England, and during his absence in Normandy as king's lieutenant-general, he appointed the old Beaufort servant John Martyn as receiver-general of his lands.⁽⁵⁾ However, they were to remain vulnerable additions

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- (1) An account for these properties, 1456-7, reveals an annual income from the 'Gournay manors' of £295 7s 1d (PRO, SC6/1095/7).
 - (2) PRO, SC6/974/9; SC6/1123/1 (receiver-general's and ministers' accounts of the Gournay lands from the death of Tiptoft to Michaelmas 1443).
 - (3) Edmund Beaufort's petition concerning parliamentary approval of the grant was made on 5 February 1446; the donation was acknowledged by parliament on 12 April 1446 (PRO, E28/76; RP, V, 446-7). Even after this some of the feoffees refused to accept his right of title (PRO, E28/77, 4 November 1446). This alienation from the duchy of Cornwall is discussed in B.P. Wolffe, The Royal Demesne, 102-4.
 - (4) The cardinal had purchased these from the crown on 25 May 1439, for the sum of £8,666 13s 4d (CPR, 1436-41, 276).
 - (5) PRO, E159/225, K.R., Recorda, Easter, m.1. Martyn had been receiver-general of Margaret, duchess of Clarence, and after her death had served both John and Edmund. He was to remain receiver-general of the latter's estates after his return from France in 1450 (Devon RO, M41; WAM, 5101; PRO, E403/742, 12 May 1441; PRO, E326/13585).

to his estate in view of the growing concern at the extent of alienations from the royal demesne. The Gournay and Richmond lands were resumed by the parliament of 1450-1; however, Edmund was able to secure their return, in 1452, along with an additional grant of the lordship of the Isle of Wight, by surrendering most of the annuities that had descended to him from his brother.⁽¹⁾ The lands were resumed again in 1455-6, shortly after Edmund's death at St. Albans, though his widow Eleanor was able to secure a substantial farm on both properties.⁽²⁾

The acquisition of a more substantial English estate provided the crucial background to Edmund Beaufort's career. He had been created duke of Somerset on 31 March 1448, shortly before crossing to France, though unlike his brother, he received no endowment to accompany the promotion.⁽³⁾ However by 1451, after the loss of his large estates in Normandy and the resumption of much of his English property, the value of his lands was in the region of £700 year, a relatively small sum to support his dignity.⁽⁴⁾ Edmund's lands and titles in France had been

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- (1) On 6 September 1452 the Gournay manors were regranted to Edmund with, in addition, the lordship of the Isle of Wight and the castle of Carisbrooke. In return he was to surrender the annuity of £500 held from the exchequer that had descended to him after the death of his brother. If the value of the lands exceeded this sum the remainder was to be deducted from the £500 held at the petty custom of London (CPR, 1452-61, 18-19). The properties that had passed to Edmund on the death of the cardinal were exempted from the acts of resumption (B.P. Wolfe, The Royal Demesne, 121, 129).
- (2) PRO, E163/8/6; Wolfe, The Royal Demesne, 103-4.
- (3) CChR, VI, 99.
- (4) It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the value of the lands held by Edmund at this stage. However the annual value of £300 given by J.R. Lander is far too low: J.R. Lander, Conflict and Stability in Fifteenth Century England (1974), 74. In addition to the Roos and Beauchamp properties held through his wife Eleanor, and the lordship of Corfe and the manors of Sutton and Woking inherited from his brother John, Edmund also held Chirk and Chirklands and the other manors that had descended to him from

of particular importance to their owner; though the precise income from these properties remains conjectural they represented substantial and prestigious honours. In England, the contrast between the landed resources of the great political rivals of the 1450s, York and Somerset, could not have been greater.⁽¹⁾

the cardinal. Some approximations for these revenues can be given. The lands held by Eleanor in 1436 were assessed at an annual value of £205, further properties were received from the Lisle and Beauchamp inheritances, though the value of these is not clear (Marshall, thesis *cit.*, 223-4). The manors of Woking and Sutton and the lordship of Corfe yielded slightly more than £54 a year (WAM, 12163, f.6). The castle and lordship of Chirk, together with surrounding lands known as Chirklands, was valued at nearly £350 a year at the beginning of the reign of Henry IV (PRO, SC6/1234/9). The manor of Canford and further lands in Cokedon and Poole produced an annual revenue of £113 6s 8d in 1462-3 (PRO, SC6/831/3). These figures suggest that even after the acts of resumption of 1450-1, Edmund enjoyed lands of a value in excess of £700 a year, though the amount of this that could be realised in clear revenue remains conjectural.

(1) York enjoyed a clear annual income from his widespread estates of nearly £6,000: C.D. Ross, Edward IV (1974), 5.

CHAPTER TWO THE BEAUFORT FAMILY AND RANSOM NEGOTIATIONS
AT THE END OF THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

The burden of a heavy ransom could ruin the fortunes of an aristocratic family. Lands were often mortgaged or sold to raise the necessary cash, while the additional expenses of a long period of captivity could sometimes exceed the ransom demanded. After the capture of Robert, Lord Moleyns in Gascony in July 1453, the lands of the family had to be put in feoffment for creditors. To the cost of the ransom itself (£6,000), losses through borrowing money and the expenses of maintaining the captive and his household while abroad added over £3,800.⁽¹⁾ Such a total could accrue through undervaluing in the sale of plate, for the exchange of money, gifts and rewards to those assisting in the release and the costs of messengers constantly travelling from England to France.⁽²⁾ Contemporaries did not observe a strict distinction between the definition of 'ransom' as the amount agreed with the custodian for the release of his prisoner and that of the total cost of the period of captivity, though in the former context the term 'finance' (in fifteenth century usage referring to the payment of a ransom) was often used. However the difference in these two figures could often be large.⁽³⁾

The Beaufort family were particularly unfortunate in that they were heavily involved in the battle of Baugé, one of the most catastrophic

(1) K.B. McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England, (Oxford, 1973), 29.

(2) Dugdale, Baronage, ii, 209-10.

(3) Shortly before the release of the earl of Huntingdon, his ransom was estimated at 5,000 marks (30 April 1425). Later, in 1430, a petition emphasising the hardship endured by the earl in the course of five years' imprisonment in France gave the total cost of his captivity as 20,000 marks. Such an amount would have included Huntingdon's surrender of debts to the crown (3,500 marks) for the exchange of the French prisoners the Sires de Gaucourt and d'Estouteville, as well as other additional expenses arising from his captivity: CP, V, 206-8.

defeats suffered by the English in France. John, the young earl of Somerset, and his brother Thomas were both captured; their step-father Thomas, duke of Clarence was killed in the fighting. The difficulties involved in securing the release of the two brothers were to cast a shadow over family fortunes. But against this devastating blow the Beauforts had one major asset, the custody of John, count of Angoulême, younger brother of Charles, duke of Orléans. Angoulême, together with six other hostages, had been taken as surety for the large sum of money pledged to Thomas, duke of Clarence and his principal captains at Buzançais, 14 November 1412, by the French dukes of Orléans, Bourbon and Berry. He was to prove an invaluable hostage, both as a guarantee for the large sum of money owed and through the influence in France that his custody accorded. Detention of an important member of the house of Orléans provided a bargaining point between the Beauforts' own ransom negotiations with their captors.

The payment of ransoms was almost invariably conducted in gold coin, the English noble and the French écus and salus. Transactions between different currencies could be complex as values often fluctuated, but for the major ransom agreements of the fifteenth century the relationship was clear and consistent. The salus and écus were interchangeable, and valued at half the English noble (6s 8d).⁽¹⁾

(1) These respective values were clearly laid out in Henry V's ordinances concerning the release of coinage, given at Rouen on 11 April 1421. The gold noble was assessed at 60 sols tournois, the écus and salus at 30 sols tournois. Values could fluctuate, though if this was the case it was always clearly indicated. However, for all the major ransoms the simple ratio of 2:1 was consistently applied: Rymer, X, 479-81 (the duke of Bourbon); X, 776-86 (the duke of Orléans).

The detail of ransom arrangements, a difficult and complicated area, was deposited among the records of the families concerned. The greatest amount of surviving material concerns the Orléans family; many of their documents from the Chambre des Comptes at Blois, although scattered during the nineteenth century, remain extant.⁽¹⁾ These records contain much of relevance both to Angoulême's captivity and various attempts to secure the release of the Beaufort prisoners, and assume a particular significance in view of the long-running dispute between the two families over the sum due for Angoulême's release. With a large amount still outstanding, the case was brought before the Paris Parlement in May 1480. A number of registers prepared for the defending party, Marie de Cleves, duchess of Orléans, provide a wealth of additional information.⁽²⁾ Our knowledge of the case is broadened by the survival of a large body of material from the muniments of Lady Margaret Beaufort.⁽³⁾ Earlier information on the English side is however more scanty. The pieces that do exist reveal the dangers of an over-reliance on French sources, especially since the copies of documents and arguments prepared in the defence of the duchess of Orléans in 1481 represented only one side of a contentious and extremely difficult piece of litigation.⁽⁴⁾

(1) These documents were sold to the Baron Joursanvault in 1792. After Joursanvault's death in 1832 his collection was offered for sale and the material became scattered. A considerable amount was purchased by the British Museum, and is classified under the section Additional Charters. The dispersal is discussed in C. Lannette-Clairie, Archives Départementales du Loiret. Inventaire Analytique. Collection Joursanvault (Orléans, 1976), 6-8.

(2) AN, J919/ 25, 26, 32.

(3) WAM, 12285-12321.

(4) The most important account of Angoulême's captivity, G. Dupont-Ferrier, 'La Captivité de Jean d'Orléans, Comte d'Angoulême (1412-45)', Revue Historique, LXII (1896), 42-74, based on the Orléans records, especially the material prepared for the Parlement case of 1480, often assumes the arguments of the defending party as simple fact. Compare, however, WAM, 12287 (the register containing the case of

The Beaufort custody of Jean, count of Angoulême, had its origins in the train of events that brought Thomas, duke of Clarence, and his captains to France in 1412. The expedition was a result of an alliance between a group of French princes, headed by Orléans, Berry and Bourbon, and the English king Henry IV against the duke of Burgundy. Active assistance from England was promised and on 8 June 1412 Clarence was appointed commander of a force of some 1,000 men-at-arms and 3,000 archers.⁽¹⁾ Among those contributing retinues were the duke of York, the earl of Dorset and Sir John Cornwall.⁽²⁾ However the army disembarked at Cherbourg on 10 August 1412 only to find that a peace had been concluded between the two parties and the English alliance had been renounced.⁽³⁾ Clarence, faced with the loss of the army's wages, which by the treaty were to have been paid by the French, refused to accept the new peace. His army crossed the Loire on 19 September and marched through Sologne plundering and burning.⁽⁴⁾ Faced with the devastation of their lands, the principal French dukes came to terms with the English. Negotiations had commenced in October and on 14 November at

the plaintiff, Margaret, duchess of Somerset), for an indication of the complexity of the issues involved. The records and references presented in the registers of either side were selected retrospectively; each presents a somewhat distorted picture.

- (1) J. Wylie, History of England under Henry the Fourth (1884-98, in 4 vols), IV, 73. Clarence was also appointed lieutenant of Aquitaine on 11 July 1412.
- (2) York's retinue was at a strength of 260 men-at-arms and an unspecified number of archers, Dorset's consisted of 240 men-at-arms and 1,200 archers and Sir John Cornwall's 90 men-at-arms and 270 archers (ibid., 75; M. Vale, English Gascony 1399-1453, 62-4).
- (3) The formal renunciation of the treaty with the English by Berry, Bourbon and Orléans had taken place on 8 August 1412 (Wylie, Henry IV, iv, 77-9).
- (4) Ibid., 80-1.

Buzançais a treaty was signed between Orléans, Berry and Bourbon and Clarence.⁽¹⁾ It was arranged that the English were to be bought out for 150,000 écus d'or, but this sum could not be raised in cash and so the total payment was increased to 210,000 écus for surety on which were provided jewels and seven hostages. All the hostages were provided by Orléans and consisted of his younger brother Jean, count of Angoulême, and six members of the Orléans household (Archambaud de Villars, Macé le Borgne, Guillaume le Bouteiller, Jean de Saveuses, Jean Davy and Hector de Pontbriant).⁽²⁾

Clarence, as negotiator of the treaty, was responsible for the custody of the hostages and the unfortunate Angoulême, only thirteen years old, was escorted to Bordeaux which Clarence and his men had reached by 11 December 1412.⁽³⁾ The duke was to remain in Gascony, in his capacity of king's lieutenant of Aquitaine, until the middle of July 1413 and during this period payments for the large indemnity were regularly being received.⁽⁴⁾ On his return to England, the seven captives were detained in London. The status of Angoulême, the principal hostage, was not that of a normal prisoner held to ransom but that of a pledge for his brother's debt. As well as despatching to England regular

(1) Orléans and Bourbon had been in negotiations with Clarence from 15 October 1412 (AN, K59/2). From the signing of the treaty of 14 November all acts of war by Clarence's army were to cease and he was to leave French territory (Wylie, Henry IV, iv, 83).

(2) Ibid., 83-4; Dupont-Ferrier, 'La Captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 42-44. The full detail of the distribution of the 210,000 écus is listed in Table 1.

(3) M. Vale, English Gascony, 62.

(4) Ibid., 67. Early in August Orléans' receiver-general arrived in Gascony with further sums in gold to find that Clarence had left for England, with Angoulême in his custody. He discussed the distribution of the money with York and Dorset (BL, Add.Ch. 3451).

payments towards the large indemnity, Orléans provided his brother with an annual pension of 6,000 livres tournois.⁽¹⁾ Thus the conditions of his detention were not particularly harsh and initially there was good cause for optimism over a rapid settlement of the debt. By 1417 nearly half the sum had been raised and an attempt was made by Orléans to secure the rest on loan and thus achieve a rapid release of all the hostages.⁽²⁾ However the effort failed and the effects of Orléans' own capture at Agincourt in 1415 and the loss of many of his estates in Normandy to Henry V after 1417 began to take their toll, preventing further large repayments of the sum.⁽³⁾

Before Clarence returned to France with Henry V in 1417, he drew up his will (10 July 1417) in which he made provision for the settlement of the amount of the debt still outstanding. The duke had accumulated considerable expenses and both sums owed to him by the king and the remainder of the indemnity due from Buzançais were to go towards settling the debts on his estate. Once these had been disposed, if Clarence was to die without male issue, the remaining amount was to be divided between his wife Margaret and her eldest son by her marriage to John Beaufort, earl of Somerset, Henry and his heirs male.⁽⁴⁾ The

(1) P. Champion, Vie de Charles d'Orléans (Paris, 1911), 159.

(2) 86,040 écus had been paid (including the satisfaction of the sums due to Cornwall and Dorset and 5,400 écus paid to York before his death at Agincourt in 1415; see Table 1), leaving a total of 123,959 écus still outstanding. However, the attempt, negotiated with Clarence on 22 May 1417, to borrow the rest of the money on the surety of Orléans' lands and secure the release of the hostages, did not succeed (BL, Add.Ms. 21359, ff.1-7; Dupont-Ferrier, loc. cit., 57-8).

(3) McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England, 37.

(4) J. Nichols, Royal Wills, 233-4. The crown owed Clarence £1,297 for wages of soldiers, for which the duke held jewels in pledge; the sum had still not been settled in 1430; PRO, E403/696 (12 November 1430). After Henry Beaufort's death in 1418 John Beaufort became heir to the remainder of the amount pledged at Buzançais.

duke's return to France and his death at Baugé on 21 March 1421 left his affairs in disarray and some of his debts had not been settled many years later.⁽¹⁾ But the provision in his will was to place the responsibility of the custody of Angoulême and the other hostages firmly in the hands of the Beaufort family, and it was they who directed subsequent negotiations for his release.

In November 1419, Margaret Beaufort, duchess of Clarence, also crossed to France with a large contingent of household servants.⁽²⁾ The occasion marked the first visit of the three Beaufort brothers, John, Thomas and Edmund, to France. They accompanied the retinue of their mother, being assigned their own individual servants, while their sisters were left in the safe-keeping of the prioress of Dartford.⁽³⁾ New gowns, doublets and other items of clothing were bought for them before the voyage but the more expensive items of war equipment, horses and armour, were only purchased for John and Thomas; an indication that Edmund was considered too young to take part in any of the campaigns.⁽⁴⁾ Goods, horses and equipment were transported from London to Portsmouth. John, the young earl of Somerset, received a present of two horses from his uncle, the bishop of Winchester, who also paid for the carriage of his stores from Southwark. Mariners were assembled and a balinger arrested to carry the company to Harfleur.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) As late as 1446 writs of distraint were being issued to sheriffs in Somerset and Dorset to proceed against Edmund earl of Dorset, executor of Margaret duchess of Clarence, concerning a loan of £6,000 received by the duke of Clarence from Richard Courtenay in 1417 (PRO, E202/127).
- (2) WAM, 12163 (Receiver-general's account of the duke of Clarence, 1418-22), f.16^v.
- (3) Ibid., ff.16^v, 21.
- (4) Ibid., ff.12, 12^v.
- (5) Ibid., ff.12^v, 21^v.

The following year saw the consolidation of Henry V's progress in France with the signing of the Treaty of Troyes on 21 May 1420. From July a large Anglo-Burgundian army invested the town of Melun, on the Seine south of Paris. This was a long and difficult siege that lasted until 18 November. John, earl of Somerset, was present in the English force along with his step-father Thomas, duke of Clarence.⁽¹⁾ In January 1421 Henry V left for England, conferring command in his absence to his brother Thomas.⁽²⁾ Clarence gathered together a new army in February and undertook a raid into Anjou and Maine that was to have disastrous consequences.⁽³⁾ The dauphin's forces had gathered at Le Mans and strengthened by a considerable contingent of Scottish reinforcements under the earls of Buchan and Wigtown had blocked the English line of march near Baugé in Anjou. Hearing of the proximity of the enemy, Clarence impulsively ordered an attack even before the majority of his own troops had been properly gathered together. This premature assault led to a disastrous rout with the English being overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers. Clarence himself, John Lord Roos, Sir John Gray of Hethon, Sir Gilbert Umfraville and many other knights died in the fighting.⁽⁴⁾ Among those captured were the earl of Huntingdon, John earl of Somerset, Lord FitzWalter and John's younger brother Thomas.

(1) CP, XII, i, 46.

(2) Clarence was appointed commander in Normandy on 18 January 1421 (Rymer, X, 49).

(3) R. Planchenault, 'La bataille de Baugé', Mémoires de la Société Nationale d'Agriculture, Sciences et Arts d'Angers, XXVIII (1925), 7-9. John Kyghley, bailli of Rouen was commissioned to muster Clarence's troops at Pont-de-l'Arche on 23 February 1421 (Calendar of Norman Rolls, 408).

(4) R. Planchenault, loc.cit., 10-25; Rymer, X, 95.

Edmund does not appear to have been at the battle.⁽¹⁾ All these noblemen fell into the hands of the Scots, who had borne the brunt of the fighting. Somerset was captured by Lawrence Vernon, Huntingdon by John Sibbald, Lord FitzWalter by Henry Cunningham. Thomas Beaufort fell into the hands of John Stuart, earl of Buchan.⁽²⁾ This victory greatly boosted the morale of the dauphinist party; a total debacle was prevented by the earl of Salisbury, who had gathered together the remainder of the English troops, mostly archers. Clarence's bastard son John, arriving with the earl, managed to recover his father's body.⁽³⁾ In a brilliant rearguard action Salisbury safely led the remnants of the army back into Normandy.⁽⁴⁾ Meanwhile the Dauphin Charles created

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- (1) The persistent legend that Edmund Beaufort was captured at the battle rests on a misunderstanding rather than any actual evidence. The confusion arose because a number of chroniclers simply referred to the captives as the earl of Somerset and his brother. Since the existence of Thomas Beaufort has often been overlooked, this brother was wrongly assumed to be Edmund (see, for example, Wylie and Waugh, Henry V, iii, 306). However many chroniclers specifically mention Thomas. The Latin Brut in English Historical Literature in the Fifteenth Century, ed. C. Kingsford (Oxford, 1913), 320, is the most precise, 'Comes Somersetie Thomas Beaufort, frater eius, qui postmodum fuit Comes de Perche' (a reference that Kingsford, ibid., n.4, again assumed to be an error for Edmund). See also Scotichronicon, IV, 1216; Monstrelet, IV, 38; Chastellain, Oeuvres, I, 226-7. Edmund is more likely to have remained with his mother at Clarence's hôtel at Rouen (a considerable quantity of goods were being purchased for the hôtel on 1 February 1421; ADSM, Tabellionage de Rouen, 1420-1, f.574^v).
- (2) F. Michel, Les Écossais en France, (1862), i, 119-20.
- (3) Many years later, on 11 July 1428, the Bastard of Clarence was awarded the Irish manors of Newcastle, Esher and Cromelyn for his bravery in recovering his father's body (Rymer, X, 406). Clarence's body was shipped back to England in July 1422 (Calendar of Norman Rolls, 429), where his funeral took place (the funeral expenses are recorded in WAM, 12163, ff.23-23^v).
- (4) R. Planchenaült, 'Les suites de la bataille de Baugé (1421)', Mémoires de la Société Nationale d'Agriculture, Sciences et Arts d'Angers, XXXIII (1930), 90-107. Salisbury's generalship and the arrival of reinforcements under Henry V stabilised the English position.

the earl of Buchan constable of France, at Tours on 5 April 1421, and entertained the principal Scottish captains and their prisoners to a magnificent banquet.⁽¹⁾

The news of the capture of a number of the English nobility caused a flurry of activity at Orléans, where it was hoped that some sort of exchange could be negotiated for the captives in England. No sooner had the details of Baugé reached Blois than the chancellor of the duke Orléans despatched a messenger to the dauphin at Poitiers, asking if he or his council would write to the Scottish lords, at present in the region of Le Mans, concerning the English captives and the possibility of their release in exchange for Orléans or Angoulême.⁽²⁾ Messages were later (22 April) sent to the Scots themselves at Vendôme.⁽³⁾ The possibility of securing the freedom of Orléans himself was unlikely in view of Henry V's attitude towards the release of any of the major Agincourt prisoners. However an exchange involving the count of Angoulême remained a possibility and towards the end of May 1421 Orléans' council at Blois sent enquiries to Paris and Rouen, to the duchess of Clarence and the duke of Exeter, concerning the exchange of Thomas Beaufort for Angoulême. Another was sent to the earl of Buchan, Beaufort's captor, in Touraine. This, and a later enquiry to Lawrence Vernon,

(1) F. Michel, Les Écossais en France, I, 120-1.

(2) BL, Add. Ch. 297. This and a number of other documents concerning these discussions (with the exception of Add. Ch. 3550) are printed in A. Joubert, Documents inédits sur la Guerre de Cent Ans. Négociations relatives à l'échange de Charles, duc d'Orléans, et de Jean, comte d'Angoulême, contre les seigneurs anglais (Angers, 1890), though Joubert mistakenly assumes that Salisbury was also captured in the battle (ibid., 5, n.3).

(3) BL, Add. Ch. 3550.

captor of the earl of Somerset, failed to achieve any progress although the reason for this is not clear.⁽¹⁾

On the return of the duchess of Clarence to England in 1422, a new arrangement was made concerning the remainder of the indemnity that Angoulême stood as surety for.⁽²⁾ At Buzançais, Clarence had undertaken to repay his principal captains for the wages of their retinues from the sum assigned to him. Since Clarence had died without receiving much of this sum, the duchess, who had the responsibility of settling his debts, returned this obligation to Orléans. The portion still owed to the late Duke Thomas was consequently reduced, and the difference transferred to new debts, both to Thomas Beaufort duke of Exeter and to the executors of the duke of York (killed at Agincourt in 1415).⁽³⁾ This was not an alteration of the original treaty and the sum owed by Orléans remained the same. However Margaret retained both the custody of Angoulême and the other hostages and the right to allow their release. Angoulême was kept at the Beaufort residence at Maxey in Lincolnshire or in the custody of a Beaufort servant, Richard Waller, in Groombridge in Kent.⁽⁴⁾ The fortunes of the Orléans

(1) BL, Add. Ch. 3552 (23 May 1421), 306 (10 July 1422).

(2) This re-allocation is laid out in the statement of account prepared by the duchess of Somerset for the Parlement case of 1480 (WAM, 12321, f.1^v). It is also discussed in Dupont-Ferrier, 'La Captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 58, where, however, the new sum due to York is not given correctly, and the context of the arrangement (assumed to represent the assignment of an additional amount, above the treaty of Buzançais) not properly understood.

(3) The detail of the re-allocation is listed in Table 2. For the strengths of the retinues of York and Dorset see Vale, English Gascony, 62-4.

(4) Dupont-Ferrier, loc.cit., 49. Waller, a servant of Clarence, was later to become the master of Cardinal Beaufort's household and was a co-executor of his will: A. Marshall, 'English war captains', 122-3.

family were at a low ebb and Angoulême was to experience difficulty even in securing cash for his own personal expenses.⁽¹⁾

While attempts to secure an exchange of prisoners had met with little success, events were to take a new course. On 14 May 1423 Lawrence Vernon surrendered Somerset to the dauphin for the sum of 40,000 écus d'or; 15,000 écus were paid in cash, the remainder by a grant of land, the lordship of Montreuil-Bonnin. The grant indicated that Somerset was to be used 'pour en racheter la delivrance de notre trescher et tresame cousin le Conte de Eu tenans a present prisonnier es mains de nos anciens l'ennemis et adversaires les anglais de la journee d'azincourt'.⁽²⁾ With this in mind, the custody of Somerset was transferred to Eu's mother, Marie de Berry, duchess of Bourbon.⁽³⁾

This plan for Somerset to be used in an exchange for Charles d'Artois, count of Eu, one of the most important of the Agincourt prisoners, created a major difficulty for the Beauforts. Henry V had in his will singled out both Orléans and Eu, and had stipulated that neither should be released if any damage might arise to the English position embodied in the Treaty of Troyes as a result.⁽⁴⁾ Such careful instructions from the late king made the possibility of negotiating an exchange between

(1) Angoulême wrote to his brother, 'in great need', from Maxey on 31 December 1427 (BL, Add. Ch. 336). Small loans were arranged, including one of 60 salus from Thomas Sutton the earl of Somerset's receiver-general (BL, Add. Ch. 11826).

(2) AN, K168/92.

(3) According to Monstrelet it was Marie de Berry who was responsible for the purchase of Somerset from his Scottish captor (Monstrelet, V, 346). Her first husband had been Philip, count of Eu, and it was their son Charles who was taken prisoner at Agincourt. After Philip's death in 1396 Marie had remarried, to Jean, duke of Bourbon.

(4) The firm instruction in Henry's last will of 9 June 1421 that the release of neither Orléans or Eu should endanger the peace with France, is revealed in P. and F. Strong, 'The last will and codicil of Henry V', EHR, XCVI (1981), 92.

Eu and Somerset highly unlikely, certainly while Henry VI was still a minor.

However, the transfer of Somerset to the house of Bourbon opened up a different avenue for the attempt to secure both brothers' release. Jean, duke of Bourbon, Marie de Berry's second husband, was another of the high-ranking Agincourt prisoners. Unlike either Orléans or Eu, an agreement had already been drawn up for his liberation before Henry's death (16 January 1421).⁽¹⁾ The reason for this was Bourbon's willingness to recognise the validity of the Treaty of Troyes. Even so, the terms were harsh and rested on both financial and political considerations. Jean was to try to induce his eldest son, the count of Clermont, to leave the dauphinist side. He was to deliver hostages for this, including his younger son Louis, and to secure the surrender to the English of six of the principal fortresses in his comté of Clermont. In addition, he was to pay a ransom of 100,000 écus, the first 60,000 by 8 August 1421 (on which the duke was to be released), the remainder six months after that date.⁽²⁾ Bourbon tried hard to fulfil these arrangements. He empowered his wife Marie de Berry with all necessary authority to raise the money for his ransom, lands were sold and loans arranged. By 10 April 25,000 écus had been paid but the remaining 35,000 écus were not delivered until November 1421. Since he had failed to pay this sum within the time allowed in the treaty, the unfortunate duke remained in captivity.⁽³⁾

(1) Rymer, X, 439-41 (confirmed 17 March 1421, ibid., 85).

(2) Ibid.

(3) Wylie and Waugh, Henry V, iii, 287-8. It is suggested by A. Leguai, 'Le problème des rançons au quinzième siècle: la captivité de Jean I duc de Bourbon', Cahiers d'Histoire, VI (1961), 47-9, that by the payment of the second instalment, Jean had fulfilled the obligations of the treaty and that Henry V blocked his release through fears that the political clauses of the agreement would not be realised. However, the terms of the treaty clearly stipulate that the full 60,000 écus were due by August 1421.

After the custody of John, earl of Somerset had been transferred to the duchess of Bourbon, the chance arose of securing the freedom of both the Beauforts as part of the terms of Bourbon's release. This important possibility was discussed in a meeting of the English council on 10 March 1427, shortly before Bedford's return to France. It was decided that Bourbon would be released on the fulfilment of the agreement made between him and Henry V and that in addition he was to secure the liberation of both of the Beaufort brothers or give security for their ransoms. Such sums would then be repaid by the Beaufort family to Henry VI, if he so wished it, on his coming of age.⁽¹⁾

A petition by John and Thomas to parliament made reference to this new arrangement. A contract had been drawn up on this matter between Bedford (Bourbon's captor) and the French duke. According to the two prisoners, this important agreement had been secured as a result of the intervention of their late uncle Thomas, duke of Exeter.⁽²⁾ A copy of the bond in which Bourbon guaranteed to secure their release was also attached to the petition.⁽³⁾ The supplicants pressed that the present parliament should approve the new arrangement concerning the release of Bourbon, formally including the clauses providing for their release, adding that no other way of securing their freedom existed and that they had suffered much hardship through their long detention in France.⁽⁴⁾

(1) PPC, III, 255-6.

(2) PRO, SC8/141/7018. The petition was addressed to the duke of Gloucester and the lords spiritual and temporal of the present parliament. It is undated, but must have been intended for the parliament which sat at Westminster, from 13 October to Christmas 1427. In fact the bill was never formally presented and may have been dealt with by the council.

(3) It is now filed under PRO, C47/30/9/14. Bourbon formally promised Bedford to secure the release of John, earl of Somerset and his brother Sir Thomas Beaufort, both prisoners in France.

(4) PRO, SC8/141/7018.

On such an important matter, especially since the text of the original treaty had been established by Henry V, an appeal to the authority of parliament was appropriate. A new agreement was subsequently made with Bourbon, and was formally ratified in London on 8 February 1429, containing both the provisions of the old treaty and the new obligation to secure the Beaufort's freedom.⁽¹⁾

This new arrangement, while appearing to offer a very real solution to the difficulties of the Beauforts, was in fact full of problems. Although Bourbon had consented to what was, in effect, a considerable increase to the original ransom amount, the political clauses of the treaty were now completely unrealisable. After the considerable French military success of the summer of 1429, there was little prospect of Charles VII's government accepting the delivery of Bourbon's castles to the English. Moreover the duke's own health was now becoming dangerously weak. Fearing to lose the ransom altogether the English resolved to rule out the political obligations in the treaty. Instead, in a new agreement of 15 January 1430, Bourbon was to pay an additional 60,000 écus by way of compensation for their non-fulfilment. This, together with the 40,000 écus still outstanding for his ransom and a sum of 30,000 écus for the expenses of his captivity in England, brought the total demanded to 130,000 écus in addition to the costs of securing

(1) Rymer, X, 441-3. The authority of parliament had been necessary to approve the release of the Sire de Gaucourt, another Agincourt prisoner, in exchange for the earl of Hungtindon (RP, IV, 247, 283-4).

the release of the Beauforts.⁽¹⁾ This latter sum was specified for the first time in a further agreement of 26 November 1430, being 40,000 écus for John and 24,000 écus for Thomas, a total of 64,000 écus.⁽²⁾ These new treaties, which brought the sum outstanding on Bourbon's ransom to 194,000 écus, were seen as both excessive and unjustified by the French. Indeed the duke's eldest son Charles, who had taken over the administration of his father's estate in 1427, refused to accept their validity.⁽³⁾ As a result the likelihood of Bourbon collecting more than a fraction of the sum demanded remained highly problematical.

While these negotiations were proceeding, an attempt was made to secure the freedom of Thomas Beaufort from a totally different quarter. It represented a return to the old plan of achieving Thomas's release through an exchange against the Beaufort custody of the count of Angoulême. It was brought about by Angoulême's kinsman, the count of Dunois, Bastard of Orléans, who had constantly striven to secure his

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- (1) A. Leguai, De la Seigneurie à l'État, le Bourbonnais pendant la guerre de cent ans (Moulins, 1969), 340-2, correctly cites this total. His earlier article, 'Le problème des rançons', 49-51, indicated that the English had demanded two additional payments, 25,000 écus in July 1422 and 60,000 écus on 31 August 1422. If such an extortionate arrangement had been made it would have had to be recorded in a new and legally binding treaty. However the agreement made with Jean on 8 February 1429 refers only to the treaty of 16 January 1421, of which 40,000 écus of the agreed ransom (100,000 écus) were still outstanding (Rymer, X, 439-43). This clear statement of account also contradicts Leguai's suggestion ('Le problème des rançons', 56) that Bourbon had paid a further 60,000 écus towards his ransom between 13 February 1422 and 2 June 1423; this whole article is misleading and unreliable.
- (2) Rymer, X, 479-81.
- (3) A. Leguai, De la Seigneurie à l'État, 340-2; J.M. de la Mure, Histoire des ducs de Bourbon (Paris, 4 vols, 1860-97), II. 131. n.1.

release.⁽¹⁾ Dunois negotiated the arrangement with Tanguy du Chastel, now Thomas's captor, at Blois on 28 February 1430.⁽²⁾ Interestingly, it was also to involve a prisoner of the Bastard himself, the earl of Suffolk, who had been captured by Dunois at Jargeau (12 June 1429). Tanguy was to receive the ransom of Thomas Beaufort, assessed at 28,000 écus, from the duke of Orléans within four months from the present arrangement. The castle of Ramorantin was to be held as pledge for this amount and ceded if it was not delivered. In return Thomas agreed that the 28,000 écus would be deducted from the total outstanding for the count of Angoulême. Furthermore, the earl of Suffolk promised to pay the remainder of his ransom to the duke of Orléans for the same purpose, and on his release to use all his influence to secure the freedom of Angoulême.⁽³⁾

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- (1) Dunois had organised a public collection in his own comté in 1424, in which the town of Châteaudun had contributed a loan of 200 écus 'pour aider a paier la finance de Monsieur le conte d'Angoulême, prisonnier par ottaige en Angleterre': L. Merlet, Registres et minutes des notaires du comté de Dunois, 1369-1676 (Chartres, 1886), 18. The plight of Angoulême and the other hostages was also known to the dauphin. In a congé granted to Paris merchants engaged in raising money for the captives, he spoke of their detention, 'qui des longtemps ont este et sont en hotage en pais d'Engleterre, es mains du duc de Clarence' (Bibliothèque Municipale du Mans, Ms.163, f.81). However little was provided to the Orléans family in the way of financial assistance.
- (2) BL, Add. Ch. 3655. Thomas Beaufort's original captor, John Stuart, earl of Buchan, had been killed at the battle of Verneuil on 17 August 1424. It is not clear whether Beaufort had been bought from Buchan before his death or was sold afterwards, perhaps to settle the earl's debts to the dauphinists (a sum of 1,690 livres tournois: see F. Michel, Les Écossais en France, I, 150, n.4).
- (3) BL, Add. Ch. 3655. The document was signed by both Thomas Beaufort and Suffolk and had Beaufort's seal attached. Underneath the agreement Suffolk had added in his own hand 'je promes a mettre mon seal a ces presentes, escriptes de main le dernier jour de fevrier'. Suffolk had been released by Dunois by March 1431. His brother Thomas de la Pole was kept in custody for surety for the ransom (CP, XII, i, 444-5).

This agreement may well have hastened Suffolk's own release. The earl was free by March 1431 and payments of his ransom were delivered to the duke of Orléans.⁽¹⁾ Suffolk's promise to work for the release of Angoulême was significant in that it brought about a close connection with the Beaufort family, which was to last for many years. However for some reason the main body of the provisions concerning the release of Thomas Beaufort did not take effect. Perhaps Orléans could not guarantee the sum demanded within such a short space of time. Alternatively, on the English side, the Beauforts may have still hoped to receive the money through the conditions of release of the duke of Bourbon, thus saving any assignment on the debt owed for Angoulême. A bond of 21 April 1430 entered into by Cardinal Beaufort and Margaret duchess of Clarence for a loan of 2,000 marks for Thomas's ransom (to be held against the cardinal's goods in Southampton) stated the condition that if Thomas secured his freedom through the intervention of the duke of Bourbon, the amount would be repayable to the king, if he so wished it, when he came of age.⁽²⁾ It was evident that the family had decided to raise the ransom themselves and on their own pledges Thomas had been released by August 1430.⁽³⁾

The terms reached with the captive duke of Bourbon, on 26 November 1430, referred to the fact that Thomas Beaufort 'est eslargi de sa prison' for a payment of 24,000 écus, 'a la quelle somme Icellui Thomas a compose pour sa Deliverance et Rancon'.⁽⁴⁾ This ransom of

(1) AN, K64/37, an account of money despatched to Orléans in England 1415-40, contains a number of references to Suffolk's ransom money.

(2) CCR, 1429-35, 31. Dupont-Ferrier, 'La captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 60-1, assumes that the agreement of 28 February 1430 was put into effect.

(3) Thomas Beaufort commenced active war service in France at the end of August 1430: see below, 78.

(4) Rymer, X, 480.

24,000 écus d'or (£4,000) was a significant improvement on the amount negotiated at Blois (28,000 écus) which the Beauforts may have complained was too high for someone of Thomas's rank, especially since he held no land in his own right. However the family still ran into difficulty trying to pay off this sum.

In February 1431 Margaret, duchess of Clarence attempted to secure from the exchequer part of the sum of £2,000, owed to her in arrears of her dower (paid by annual annuity). A warrant to the exchequer referred to the fact that she had granted 2,000 marks of this towards the cost of her son Thomas's ransom, and that Thomas himself was about to return to France with his retinue to perform service of war for the king.⁽¹⁾ If a captain was about to embark overseas it was customary practice for him to receive priority at the exchequer for outstanding debts. In the event Margaret received an immediate payment of 1,000 marks of this and the remainder continued to be paid out in small sums after Thomas himself had died.⁽²⁾ Small amounts were also collected from the duke of Orléans.⁽³⁾ Licence was granted for the Beauforts to ship gold coin overseas for the payment of Thomas's ransom.⁽⁴⁾

(1) PRO, E404/47/163 (7 February 1431).

(2) £666 13s 4d was paid out to Margaret (collected by her son Thomas, now holding the title of count of Perche) on 22 February 1431 (PRO, E403/696). The remainder continued to be paid out in small sums. £93 6s 8d was delivered to Margaret on 4 November 1432, through her son Edmund, count of Mortain 'for the use of Thomas, late count of Perche, the said countess's son deceased, in part payment of her dower' (PRO, E403/706).

(3) £279 was received by Margaret on 16 February 1431, delivered by John Kyghley, a further £79 by Thomas and Edmund Beaufort on 20 March 1431 (AN, P1403, ix). Kyghley, one of the duchess's attorneys, was later to serve John Beaufort, earl of Somerset (PRO, E13/142, 24 January 1443).

(4) In March 1431 Thomas Beaufort was given licence by the council to export £3,000 in gold as part of his ransom (CPR, 1429-36, 112). Such a sum, the equivalent of 18,000 écus, would have formed most of his ransom. But later documents show that in fact only 4,000 écus were paid at this stage (AN, J919/ 25, f.10).

The council also decided, on 5 March 1431, to grant the custody of the count of Eu to Thomas Beaufort.⁽¹⁾ Whether this was intended as a prelude to an attempt to negotiate the release of Thomas's brother John remains conjectural, for on the death of Thomas himself at the siege of Louviers, on 3 October 1431, Eu was returned to the Tower of London in the custody of the crown.⁽²⁾

Thomas's early death left most of his ransom still unsettled. The unfortunate duke of Bourbon had conspicuously failed to raise any money for his own release and died in captivity on 5 February 1434.⁽³⁾ This removed the last hopes of any money coming in from that quarter. With a large sum still owed to Tanguy du Chastel, it was decided to return to the plan of transferring the obligation for the debt to the duke of Orléans in return for a deduction from the amount still owed for Angoulême. On 23 December 1435 Edmund Beaufort, count of Mortain, acting for his mother Margaret, completed a new agreement with the duke of Orléans in London.⁽⁴⁾ The article began with the assurance by Orléans that he would take over the obligations contained in the sealed letters of Mortain, Suffolk and Willoughby for the remaining

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- (1) A payment to Thomas Beaufort's servant Thomas Chambre, for the costs of Eu's custody (PRO, E403/698, 9 July 1431), refers to this council decision.
- (2) A warrant for the payment of Chambre noted that Thomas Beaufort had died in France on 3 October (PRO, E404/48/298).
- (3) A. Leguai, Le Bourbonnais pendant la Guerre de Cent Ans, 342, gives the date wrongly as 5 January 1434. The correct date is given in de la Mure, Histoire des ducs de Bourbon, II, 151, n.1. Far from making any further settlement of his ransom, Bourbon died without having satisfied the costs of his custody. Powers were given (12 February, 1434) to Sir Thomas Cumberworth, Bourbon's keeper, to distribute the goods of the late duke among his creditors (Rymer, X, 570; see also Calendar of French Rolls, 296).
- (4) AN, J919/ 25, ff.10-11.

20,000 écus owing for Thomas's ransom, thus keeping them from any process of 'dishonour'.⁽¹⁾ In return three of the hostages were to be released immediately (Guillaume le Bouteiller, Jean de Saveuses and Jean Davy), the 20,000 écus was to be subtracted from the debt due for Angoulême and Angoulême himself would be released if Orléans could find sufficient guarantees for the rest of the sum within a year.⁽²⁾ This last possibility was however to remain unfulfilled. It was overall a very satisfactory arrangement for the Beaufort family, who by this means had transferred all obligation for Thomas's ransom to the duke of Orléans.⁽³⁾

While the affairs of Thomas Beaufort were thus settled his elder brother remained in captivity. John's ransom had been fixed at 40,000 écus (£6,666 13s 4d) in the agreement with the duke of Bourbon

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- (1) 'Dishonour' was one of the methods of distraint, either against the prisoner himself or his pledges, on failure to pay the ransom. The captor would publicise the coat-of-arms of the offending party in reverse position and other such insults: M.H. Keen, The Laws of War in the Late Middle Ages (1965), 173-4. The Willoughby referred to was Robert, son of William (who had married the duchess of Clarence's elder sister Joan in 1408); an active campaigner in France during the 1420s and 30s (CP, XII, ii, 663-5).
- (2) In fact only two of the hostages were delivered; the other, Guillaume le Bouteiller, had to wait until 1440 for his release. (Dupont-Ferrier, 'La captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 65-6).
- (3) A safe-conduct was issued to Jean de Saveuses, on 12 May 1436, to go to France 'in quest of the ransom of the late count of Perche' (Calendar of French Rolls, 312). The full obligation for the ransom was now held by the house of Orléans. A loan made by Orléans' council (5 November 1436) to Tanguy du Chastel was guaranteed 'par la finaunce de feu monsieur Thomas de Beauford' (BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 3645, no. 1284). The amount loaned, 23,000 écus, was confused by Dupont-Ferrier (loc. cit., 61) with the total outstanding for the ransom. The latter was, in fact, only 20,000 écus, though the full settlement with Tanguy du Chastel had involved further expenses totalling in all some 33,999 écus 'pour toute la finance de monsieur Thomas de Beauford' (AN, K72/56, no.14).

in November 1430, but the duke died in captivity on 5 February 1434 without having raised any of this sum. In an important article of his will, drawn up in London a few days before his death (30 January 1434) and addressed to his son and heir Charles, he made provision for the captive earl:

"... que le conte de Somercette, le quel par moy et en mon nom a longuement este detenu prisonnier par mon ordonnance, estre delivre et mis en mains et prouffit de mon trescher et tresame filz le conte de Eu pour estre converti en sa deliverance, dont je me tiens pour beaucoup tenu et chargie envers lui" (1)

Thus Somerset's fate was once again linked to the captive Charles Artois, count of Eu. In view of Henry V's caution about the release of either Eu or Orléans, an attempt to arrange Somerset's release remained difficult. However the initiative of the young king himself now resolved matters.

On 7 February 1435, on royal orders, the custody of the count of Eu was transferred from the constable of the Tower to Edmund, count of Mortain.⁽²⁾ A year later, in an important council meeting of 20 February 1436, practical arrangements were made for securing Somerset's release. The count of Eu would be purchased from the crown by Somerset's attorneys for the price of 12,000 marks, a decision made by Henry VI 'at the instance and very requeste of the most worshipfull fadre in god and oure grete oncle Henry Cardinal of Englonde and oure right beloved Cousin the erle of Mortain.'⁽³⁾ Such a transaction suited both Henry's natural clemency towards longstanding war prisoners and Beaufort family interests. It was part of a wider chain of events that saw the young king consciously using the other Agincourt prisoner, Charles, duke of Orléans, in peace negotiations and preparing his release, to act as mediator between the two

(1) AN, P1370¹, no. 1882.

(2) CCR, 1429-35, 515.

(3) This decision is referred to retrospectively in a warrant to the exchequer of 13 July 1440 (PRO, E404/56/329).

sides.⁽¹⁾ Such a policy brought Henry and Cardinal Beaufort, the most influential member of the family, into close co-operation.

Deliberations now commenced between the English and French sides over the arrangements for the exchange of the two prisoners. In April 1437 Edmund, count of Mortain and Somerset's attorneys, John Middlestrete and Thomas Sutton, took the count of Eu to France in the course of negotiations.⁽²⁾ Discussions continued and finally, a year later, in April 1438, both sides were ready to release their captives.⁽³⁾ After an imprisonment of over seventeen years, the earl of Somerset at last returned to England in the summer of 1438.⁽⁴⁾

A period of captivity of such length was unprecedented among the higher nobility. Of Somerset's fellow prisoners at Baugé, Lord FitzWalter had been freed by 1426, the earl of Huntingdon a year later, by 1427.⁽⁵⁾ Those members of the aristocracy captured after the military reverses in the summer of 1429 again secured relatively rapid release. The earl of Suffolk, captured by Dunois at Jargeau, 12 June 1429, had been freed

(1) This general background is discussed in R.A. Griffiths, The Reign of King Henry VI (1981), 443-54.

(2) Rymer, X, 664.

(3) Rymer, X, 697.

(4) The count of Eu had reached France by July 1438. Significantly his release involved no obligation to keep the peace and he immediately took up military command in Normandy and the Beauvaisis: G. du Fresne de Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII (Paris, 1881-91, 6 vols), iii, 16. Thus the exchange ran against the advice concerning Orléans and Eu in Henry V's will (P. and F. Strong, 'The last will and codicil of Henry V', 92; these instructions were distorted in the summary of the will in Monstrelet, IV, 110-11, in which Henry only cautioned that Orléans and Eu should not be released before his son came of age).

(5) CP, V, 206-7, 483.

by March 1431.⁽¹⁾ Lord Talbot, taken prisoner at Patay, 18 June 1429, was exchanged for the French captain Poton de Xaintrailles in July 1433.⁽²⁾ Even the victims of the final English collapse in Normandy and Gascony, Lord Fauconberg (captured May 1449) and Lord Moleyns (July 1453), who faced more considerable problems in negotiating their release, did not endure more than seven years of captivity.⁽³⁾

The reasons for the exceptional length of Somerset's imprisonment rested in the circumstances that caused his retention by the French side, as a high-ranking prisoner of the royal blood, to serve as an exchange for the count of Eu. In this Somerset was a victim of both the instructions of Henry V concerning both Orléans and Eu, and of the long minority that followed. This unusual difficulty was clearly referred to by one contemporary chronicler:

"Eodem anno venit Johannes Beauford, Comes Somercetie a captivitate francorum, diu per annos plurimos detentus eo quod non poterat alio modo redimi quam per cambium domini comitis de Ewe, sub cuius matris demonstratu fuerat detentus; unde prefatus Johannes pro sua redempcione domino Rex Anglie satisfacere est compulsus." (4)

The total expenses of this long captivity amounted by the earl's own statement to £24,000, 'which sum was the highest value of all his lands and hereditaments whereby he was impoverished'.⁽⁵⁾ Although no account survives to verify this total expenditure, contemporaries were clearly

(1) CP, XI, 700.

(2) CP, XII, i, 444-5.

(3) Fauconberg, captured on 16 May 1449, had been released by 1456; Moleyns, captured in July 1453, by 1459 (CP, V, 282-3; VI, 618-19).

(4) 'Brief notes for 1440-3' in C. Kingsford, English Historical Literature, 341. Little is known about the general conditions of Somerset's long imprisonment. He seems to have had a bastard daughter Tacyn, for whom he made provision in his will, drawn up in 1443 (PPC, V, 288).

(5) CPR, 1436-41, 515. Although in chivalric tradition the price of the ransom was not to be above the resources of a man's patrimony, in practice the cost could cripple great families (Keen, Laws of War, 158-9).

aware of the large cost to Somerset that his imprisonment had brought about.⁽¹⁾ In another petition John mentioned the 'grete charges he hath borne of late as in paiements to youre Tresorer of Englonde for Charles Dartois called erle of Ew, xij thousand markes, to Charles calling himself Duc of Bourbon iiij thousand markes and yet remayneth ... his pledges iiij thousand markes'.⁽²⁾ The 12,000 marks agreed for the purchase of Eu was in fact paid through debts owed to Somerset by the crown. A loan by Somerset in 1436, while he was still in captivity, of 6,000 marks, was now cancelled; the remainder was deducted from arrears due to him from his annuities at the exchequer and customs of London.⁽³⁾ There remained both payments to Charles, duke of Bourbon, who had released John in 1438, and other sums including debts to his original captor Lawrence Vernon, for which Somerset had had to leave hostages as pledges at the time of his deliverance from captivity.⁽⁴⁾

The burden of a large ransom could affect both a nobleman's estate and his future royal service. The cost of the earl of Suffolk's ransom, which had forced him to sell much of his land in Normandy, effectively ended his active war service.⁽⁵⁾ The expense of the earl of Huntingdon's

(1) 'An immense sum of money', Ingulph's chronicle of the abbey of Croyland, ed. H.T. Riley (1854), 398; 'pro millibus marcarum', Giles' Chronicle, iv, 18.

(2) PPC, V, 112-13, (12 December 1439).

(3) Somerset's loan of £4,000 made through his attorney Thomas Sutton on 15 March 1436 was written off; £1,500 of bad tallies (assigned on 6 March 1431) were cancelled and £2,500 deducted from the arrears of Somerset's annuity held from the exchequer (PRO, E401/774; E403/742, 29 May 1441). Such an arrangement, the purchase of a French prisoner through cancellation of debts owed by the crown, had also occurred in the case of the earl of Huntingdon. Huntingdon purchased the Sire de Gaucourt against arrears of wages owed by the king (CP, V, 206-7).

(4) John Sutton and Edward Griffin were left with Vernon as pledges in 1438 (AN, J919/ 25, ff.18-19).

(5) Suffolk emphasised the burden of his ransom in his attempted repudiation of the charges of the Commons in 1450 (RP, V, 176).

captivity, some 20,000 marks, was likely to have been in his mind during his careful negotiations with the crown over the tenure of the lieutenancy of Gascony in 1439, and may well have prompted his return to England when his wages fell into arrears.⁽¹⁾ In such circumstances it was all the more remarkable that Somerset was prepared to return to serve the king in his wars in France, briefly in the summer of 1439, and throughout the whole of 1440, when he held the commission of king's 'lieutenant general sur le fait de la guerre'. The problems of his ransom were however likely to have been one of the main reasons for his hard bargaining with the crown over the terms of his expedition of 1443.⁽²⁾ Somerset's readiness to return to France was rewarded by Henry VI in the grant of the appanage of St-Sauveur-Lendelin, in the Norman Cotentin, 'pour consideracion des pertes inconveniens et dommages quil a eus a cause de notredit service par longue detention de prison es mains de nos adversaires'.⁽³⁾

The settlement of the sums outstanding for his ransom caused a strain on Somerset's finances. Loans were arranged with other members of the family and jewels pledged.⁽⁴⁾ The earl did however have one major asset, the custody of the hostage Jean, count of Angoulême, the sole right to whom he held after the death of his mother Margaret in December 1439.

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- (1) CP, V, 208; Vale, English Gascony, 108-9. However McFarlane, Nobility of Later Medieval England, 32, suggested from an inventory of Hungtindon's goods that the earl was not ruined through the payment of his ransom.
- (2) For a general discussion of this, see M. Jones, 'John Beaufort, duke of Somerset and the French expedition of 1443', 86-91.
- (3) The full text of this grant is given in AN, P1934⁴, ff.1-2. A landed endowment was the most favourable form of recompense for the burden of a ransom. In contrast, Talbot, who had been granted £9,000 towards his ransom from the proceeds of the gabelle, the tax on salt in Normandy, was to find the gift practically worthless. The sum had to be transferred to English revenues but at Talbot's death some £6,798 was still outstanding (Pollard, thesis cit., 325-7).
- (4) For a loan to Somerset by the countess of Devon in December 1439, for his 'finaunce', see RP, V, 22. Margaret, duchess of Somerset, was later to attempt to recover jewels her husband had pledged for loans (PRO, C1/24/230).

This prisoner and the remainder of the debt that he guaranteed almost certainly prevented Somerset having to resort to more drastic expedients such as the sale or mortgage of lands. Securing the release of Jean and the rapid collection of the sum of money still owed was a major preoccupation of the earl. His wish to achieve a speedy settlement was remarked on by Angoulême himself, who, in a letter to Dunois, said of him, '... le quil de sa grace je treve tres bien vallant a ma deliverance...'.⁽¹⁾

On his return to France in 1440, Somerset negotiated a new arrangement with Orléans. One of the other hostages, Guillaume le Bouteiller, would be released in return for Orléans taking over the obligation for the remainder of the sum that Somerset still owed Bourbon (some 10,000 écus). Somerset promised to deduct 8,000 écus of this from the amount still owed from Angoulême; the remainder, 2,000 écus, he would keep to cover the costs of the custody of Bouteiller.⁽²⁾ This agreement thus settled John's debts to his French captor Charles duke of Bourbon.

After further discussions, on 7 August 1442 a new treaty was drawn up between Somerset and the agents of the duke of Orléans. Unfortunately the text of this does not survive, but references in a number of subsidiary documents show one of the clauses concerned arrangements for the release of a certain John Bastard of Somerset. The identity of this John is not certain; most probably he was the bastard son of the first earl of Somerset, and was also captured at Baugé.⁽³⁾ By the agreement

(1) AN, K64/37, no.17.

(2) AN, J919/32, ff.103^V-104^V (3 July 1440).

(3) K.B. McFarlane, 'At the deathbed of Cardinal Beaufort', in Studies presented to F.M. Powicke, ed. R.W. Hunt, W. Pantin, R. Southern (Oxford, 1948), 425, n.4, points out that the Bastard was left a small legacy in Cardinal Beaufort's will and suggests he was either the bastard son of the first earl or of John, duke of Somerset.

1,000 salus were to be paid by Orléans to the Bastard's captor, the marshal of France La Fayette; this sum was remitted from Angoulême's debt. Orléans having delivered this payment, the Bastard was handed over to Guillaume le Bouteiller, now serving as Orléans' chamberlain.⁽¹⁾ The Bastard of Somerset remained in the hands of Orléans during the winter of 1442 and seems to have returned to England early in the new year; he was a member of his kinsman's ill-fated expedition to France in July 1443.⁽²⁾

On the satisfaction of this and other clauses, Angoulême was to be shipped over to Cherbourg, while final negotiations concerning his release were carried out.⁽³⁾ However the completion of these preliminary arrangements was for some reason delayed. Angoulême was still in England when le Bouteiller arrived for further discussions in December 1442.⁽⁴⁾ A further postponement was caused by Somerset's preparations for the major new expedition that he led across to France in July 1443. Messengers from Orléans were in contact with Somerset at the end of this campaign and travelled with him from Falaise to Caen, late in December 1443.⁽⁵⁾

(1) AN, J919/32, ff.88^v-90.

(2) In January 1443 the Bastard, now in the custody of Dunois, was presented by the duke of Orléans with a pair of spurs and two écus 'en ses necessites'; BN, Pièces Originales 2158 (Orléans), no.570. He was a member of the army that mustered under Somerset at Portsmouth on 17 July 1443 (PRO, E101/54/5). He subsequently served in Normandy under Edmund, duke of Somerset and was one of the captains sent to Gascony in 1453. He was imprisoned by the Yorkists at Guildford after the first battle of St. Albans (A. Marshall, thesis cit., 111-12).

(3) On the fulfilment of the treaty between Somerset and Orléans a further 600 marks was to be charged for Somerset's costs in conveying Angoulême across the Channel (AN, J919/25, ff.12-13). Dupont-Ferrier, 'La captivité de Jean d'Orléans', assumes that Angoulême was taken to Cherbourg towards the end of 1442. However document evidence shows that he was still in London on 16 March 1444 (BL, Add. Ch. 12211).

(4) Calendar of French Rolls, 356 (safe-conduct of 19 December 1442).

(5) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, f.29.

Arrangements were completed on Somerset's return to England early in the new year. On 16 March 1444 the duke acknowledged a payment of 4,400 salus, paid by Orléans to Pierre Jaillet, captain of Meulan, for the release of his English prisoner Sir John Hanford; again the sum was to be remitted from Angoulême's debt.⁽¹⁾ It is likely that Angoulême himself crossed to Cherbourg later in the month, at the same time as Louis de Bueil, captured during Somerset's expedition of 1443, who was also arranging the payment of his ransom.⁽²⁾

Full powers to negotiate the final treaty and conditions of release were given by Somerset to the earl of Suffolk, who was to cross to France at the head of the English embassy in the middle of March 1444.⁽³⁾ Consequently, a final accord was signed by Suffolk, as Somerset's representative and Orléans and Dunois, at Tours on 12 May 1444. By the terms of the agreement a down payment was to be made on Angoulême's release of 12,000 salus in cash together with the small emerald cross (referred to as 'la petite croix') that the Beauforts had held as pledge from Orléans, later to be valued at 4,000 salus. In addition guarantees were given for the payment of a further 65,000 salus with obligations from the duke of Orléans (20,000 salus), the dukes of Bourbon and Alençon and the counts of Dunois and Marche (each 10,000 salus) and the Sire de Lohéac (5,000 salus).⁽⁴⁾ The total worth of the treaty, the final settlement, was 81,000 salus d'or, equivalent to £13,500. However Somerset was never to see any of this sum. The duke died at Wimborne in Dorset on 27 May 1444.

(1) BL, Add. Ch. 12211.

(2) Calendar of French Rolls, 362 (safe-conduct to Louis de Bueil 22 March 1444). Angoulême had reached Cherbourg by 9 April 1444 (AN, K64/37, no.17).

(3) The great trust that Somerset had in Suffolk was observed in a letter from Angoulême to Dunois, 'car je scay de vray que mon maistre le duc de Somerset se fie moult audit conte de Southfolk' (AN, K64/37, no.17).

(4) AN, K72/56, no.5.

On the sudden death of the duke of Somerset a period of confusion resulted. Messages passed between Suffolk at Tours and Angoulême at Cherbourg.⁽¹⁾ Angoulême wrote in forceful terms to Orléans and Dunois, 11 June 1444, concerning the agreement, 'L'appointement est tres bon, ce ne fust l'inconvenient de la mort du duc de Somerset, mon maistre ... et ne rompera point, se la faute ne vient de nostre coste'.⁽²⁾ Suffolk had returned to England in the same month, where his powers in this matter were confirmed by the widowed duchess of Somerset. The treaty was accepted by the English side; Suffolk wrote to Thomas Gower, who was holding Angoulême at Cherbourg, confirming this on 23 August 1444.⁽³⁾ There only remained the matter of the audit of the final account. Here however, new problems were to develop.

The fullest information on the final arrangement with Angoulême, drawn up after his accounts had been inspected by the duchess of Somerset's auditors Thomas Gerard and John Dawson, survives in the form of transcripts. They were compiled for Margaret, duchess of Somerset by the mayor of London, John Olney, on 28 February 1447. Copies were made of a large number of letters of obligation from Angoulême, relating to the results of this audit, together with the guarantees of a number of French lords.⁽⁴⁾ Unfortunately the opening section of this body of material has been lost but the part which remains indicates the complexity, both legal and financial, of this longstanding account. The auditing consisted of a

(1) Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII, iv, 18-19. Beaucourt, however, wrongly describes the obligations of the other lords totalling 60,000 salus, does not mention the small cross and gives the date of Somerset's death incorrectly as 17 May.

(2) Ibid., 19, n.3.

(3) A near contemporary copy of this letter, written at Ewelme, survives in College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 48, f.284.

(4) BL, Add. Ms. 35814. The first part consists of copies of numerous letters of obligation made by Angoulême at Louviers on 1 April 1445 (ff.1-4). The second consists of transcripts of the guarantees given by the other French lords after the agreement at Tours of 12 May 1444 (ff.4^v-6).

detailed examination of the various quittances and receipts produced by Angoulême, matched against evidence deposited in the archival records of Clarence and Somerset. It revealed a variety of discrepancies. A number of quittances and obligations had not been drawn up in a legally acceptable formula. Others revealed minor errors of financial calculation while some had gone missing completely.⁽¹⁾ The results of the investigation had been presented to Angoulême on 23 December 1444. After over a month's consideration the captive count agreed both to the replacement of questionable receipts and, more importantly, the payment of an additional sum (9,844 salus) over and above the amount agreed at Tours, 12 May 1444.⁽²⁾

After the settlement of this matter, the final arrangements of Angoulême's release were conducted by the earl of Suffolk, who had left Nancy with Henry VI's new wife, Margaret of Anjou, on 2 March 1445.⁽³⁾ On his arrival in Paris, Suffolk drew up, on 7 March, a last treaty with Charles duke of Orléans.⁽⁴⁾ The obligations of the previous year were confirmed. A down payment of 16,000 salus (part in cash, part in jewels) was to be made on Angoulême's release, with surety for an additional

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- (1) The obligation of the duke of Bourbon had not been drawn up in a legally correct form and was to be replaced by 23 June 1445. There was a discrepancy in the record of payment for the release of Sir John Hanford, and a number of other quittances (*ibid.*, ff.1-4).
- (2) *Ibid.*, f.2; Dupont-Ferrier, 'La captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 69-71.
- (3) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 487.
- (4) BL, Add. Ch. 3997. The sum was made up of the 77,000 salus agreed at Tours (the small cross being valued at 4,000 salus) with an additional obligation for 9,844 salus (see Table 3). It is not clear what this latter amount was charged for. Dupont-Ferrier (*loc.cit.*, 69-70) suggests that Margaret's auditors took advantage of the fact that a number of quittances and seals had been lost or were drawn up incorrectly in order to raise the total due unscrupulously. Such an argument, which was brought forward by the defending side in the Parlement case of 1480, is not borne out by the original documents. Orléans' guarantee had a separate clause concerning ambiguous or missing receipts (which amounted to 8,898 salus) which were to be replaced within the year.

65,000 salus. If any of these latter pledges were not honoured, Orléans would stand as guarantor of the whole sum. Orléans also accepted the payment of the additional 9,844 salus (to be made within a year of Angoulême's release) which brought the total worth of the treaty to 90,844 salus. In addition Orléans was to replace all the discharges and receipts queried in the audit. A final clause pointed out that although the outstanding amount pledged to Clarence was now satisfied, sums were still owed to the executors of Edward duke of York.⁽¹⁾ Orléans agreed to meet any of the costs arising from legal action against the duchess of Somerset on this account. Since by the original terms of the distribution of the money, made by Clarence at Buzançais, the duke had made himself liable to York for most of his expenses, an area of possible contention clearly remained here. Obligation for the debt had been transferred to Orléans by the duchess of Clarence in 1422. The duchess of Somerset, Suffolk and the other executors of the late duke thought it prudent to obtain a general pardon for any offences committed through Angoulême's release.⁽²⁾

The way was now clear for Angoulême to be delivered from captivity. Suffolk, assisted by a number of the duchess's servants and councillors, arranged the final details of this after his arrival in Rouen (22 March).⁽³⁾ Thomas Gower, who held Angoulême at Cherbourg, was formally discharged from his responsibilities on 29 March 1445.⁽⁴⁾ Two days later Angoulême

(1) The complete amount owed to York was 37,570 écus. Unfortunately the statement of account on the English side is so badly stained that it is impossible to decipher the amount still outstanding. Significantly, the total owed to Thomas, duke of Exeter, had been completely satisfied (WAM, 12321, ff.1^v, 7^v).

(2) CPR, 1441-6, 349.

(3) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 487.

(4) College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 48, f.284^v.

had reached Rouen where he thanked Suffolk for the efforts he had made on his behalf. On 1 April the long suffering count crossed over to French-held Louviers, free after over thirty-two years of imprisonment.⁽¹⁾

The final settlement of 90,844 salus (£15,140 13s 4d) represented a considerable fortune to the Beaufort family. However, despite the guarantors, it was often difficult to secure the full repayment of such large sums. At first payments proceeded fairly regularly. 12,000 salus were paid to Suffolk for the release of Angoulême on 2 April 1445. On the same day Gower received 1,030 salus for the costs of his custody of the count.⁽²⁾ Small sums were delivered in cash over the next few years. Sir William Peyto, acting as Margaret's agent, carried 3,000 salus to the duchess at Maxey on 1 December 1445. Another 2,000 salus were delivered to Margaret and her new husband Leo Lord Welles by Sir Robert Vere on 21 August 1447.⁽³⁾ Margaret was also able to assign most of her late husband's outstanding debt to his original captor Lawrence Vernon to the house of Orléans. The total owed, both the debt itself and the cost of the custody of Somerset's two pledges, amounted to 9,000 salus. Orléans agreed to pay 7,000 salus of this, and by 1447 had secured the release of the pledges, John Sutton and Thomas Griffin, who had been held by Vernon since 1438.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Dupont-Ferrier, 'La captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 71-2. A number of agents of the duchess of Somerset had accompanied Suffolk. One, Thomas Dawson, made a loan to Margaret of Anjou in Rouen to pay her mariners (BL, Add. Ms. 23938, f.11).

(2) AN, J919/32, f.97; J919/25, f.13^V.

(3) AN, J919/25, ff.14-15; BL, Add. Ch. 12347.

(4) The total owed to Vernon, both for Somerset's debts and the costs of custody of the pledges (9,000 salus), had been negotiated by Suffolk and John Dawson (acting on behalf of the duchess) on 18 March 1445 (AN, J919/25, ff.18-19). The two pledges had secured their release by February 1447 when Angoulême paid their expenses (12 salus) for the journey from Blois to English-held Le Mans (BL, Add. Ch. 4043). On 21 August 1447 the duchess of Somerset and her new husband Leo, Lord Welles (they had married by April 1447: CP, XII, i, 48) acknowledged the remission of 7,000 salus from Angoulême's debt for the release of Sutton and Griffin (AN, J919/32, f.99).

However after 1447 payment of the large debt came to an abrupt halt. Angoulême may not have had the ready resources to bear the burden of repayment himself; he had received little in this respect from Charles VII while hopes of assistance from other quarters never materialised.⁽¹⁾ His brother had to bear the burden of his own ransom. Various summons to Orléans from the duchess of Somerset concerning the sum outstanding, including a threat to take to the process of 'dishonour' against the duke, had little effect.⁽²⁾

Matters now remained in abeyance until the improvement in Anglo-French relations after the treaty of Picquigny, many years later, in 1475. The duchess of Somerset persuaded Edward IV to intervene in the matter and write to Louis XI himself. Louis, having no wish to displease the English took an active interest in the case. He first wrote to the duchess of Orléans concerning the remainder of the debt. A detailed reply was produced, citing a variety of arguments to show that the claim was unjust and legally invalid. The lands of the house of Orléans had been laid waste after the treaty of Buzançais, thus breaking the agreement. Numerous payments to Clarence and his successors had not been acknowledged. Furthermore, Edmund Beaufort, while negotiating the surrender of Caen,

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- (1) WAM, 12296-8 (copies of a letter from Angoulême to the duchess of Somerset, mentioning his forthcoming visit to the duke of Milan and the possibility of his providing assistance over the sum still outstanding). A small grant was made to Angoulême in 1448 by the estates of Languedoc (1,717 l. 10s. tournois) to aid him in the paying of his ransom (BN, Ms. Fr. 32511, f.125).
- (2) The duchess of Somerset and her husband were given licence to sue Orléans and the other French lords on 15 March 1451 (Rymer, XI, 282). A final ultimatum over the remainder of the debt was despatched to Orléans on 1 June 1451 with little effect. Margaret was later to appeal to Charles VII, and to threaten Orléans with 'dishonour' on 18 February 1456 (AN, K72/56, nos.16, 20, 22).

on 24 June 1450, had promised the count of Dunois 10,000 écus for various expenses, of which nothing had been received.⁽¹⁾

With the duchess of Orléans obstinate in her refusal to accept the validity of the English case, the dispute was brought before the Paris Parlement, Louis himself taking an active interest in the proceedings. The case was first brought before the court on 15 May 1480.⁽³⁾ On a matter of such length of time and complexity, proceedings became hopelessly bogged down in a mass of technicalities, with both sides impossibly far apart.⁽⁴⁾ The process centred on various records of account produced by the duchess of Orléans which were disputed by Margaret's lawyers. The records of Angoulême at Cognac and Orléans at Blois were both searched.⁽⁵⁾ Little progress was made. On 26 June 1482, Louis wrote to the Parlement that the duchess of Somerset 'a des longtemps ung

- (1) AN, K72/56, no.4. The argument of the duchess of Orléans (Orléans himself, who had stood as guarantor of the treaty concerning Angoulême's release, had died on 4 January 1465) was based on the fact that a prisoner's lands, from which his ransom had to be found, became technically immune from war (see Keen, Laws of War, 160-1). The English side countered that any pillaging that occurred after Buzançais had been unauthorised and certainly not on the orders of Clarence and that such a charge should have been raised before the contract for Angoulême's release had been drawn up, rather than belatedly (WAM, 12287, ff.3^v-4, 29-30^v). The reference to the sum owed by Edmund Beaufort, duke of Somerset, to Dunois confused Dupont-Ferrier (loc.cit., 73), who thought it represented a concession of the remainder of the debt to Angoulême. It was in fact a different issue, for which process was commenced against the executors of Edmund Beaufort in the reign of Edward IV (AN, K72/56, no.4, f.3^v).
- (2) An example of the king's own personal interest in the matter is provided by a letter of Louis to the Parlement on 15 November 1480 commanding them to receive the oppositions and défenses (AN, K72/49).
- (3) AN, X^{1a} 4821, f.249. After a brief summary of the case the hearing was adjourned to 29 January 1481.
- (4) The English claimed the impossibly high figure of 83,898 salus, based on a large number of 'disallowed' receipts (WAM, 12321, f.5^v).
- (5) WAM, 12299, 12304, 12315.

proces en parlement, dont elle n'a peu ne peut avoir expedition'.⁽¹⁾
 His request for speedy judgment was too late for the duchess, who died the same summer. The case was taken over by her daughter, Margaret countess of Richmond. On 12 December 1482 the countess submitted a petition that since the duchess of Orléans had failed to produce evidence as ordered, judgment should be made on what was already before the court.⁽²⁾
 But the process was to drag on and new lawyers were appointed on behalf of Margaret on 5 July 1483.⁽³⁾

This long-running dispute was to remain unsettled. A letter of the Milanese ambassador, 19 September 1498, referred to a messenger of the French king at the English court to come to some agreement concerning 'a great ransom made heretofore by the duke of Orléans, father of the present king of France, when he was prisoner of the duke of Somerset, maternal grandfather of his majesty; and I think that with the peace so recent he does not wish to offend the King of France'.⁽⁴⁾ The sum was again mentioned in a treaty between Henry VIII and Louis XII in 1514, as an old debt, impossibly prolonged.⁽⁵⁾

In such a manner the claim over the remnants of the amount pledged to Clarence at Buzançais in 1412 finally came to an end. Although the Beaufort family failed to collect the full amount that they claimed was outstanding, their custody of Jean, count of Angoulême had proved invaluable. Through it the larger part of the ransoms of both John

(1) Lettres de Louis XI, ix, 244, and n.1 for further details of the case.

(2) WAM, 12311-12.

(3) Letters of Thomas Stanley, lord Stanley and Margaret, countess of Richmond, his wife, notified the court of the appointment of proxies consequent on the death of Margaret, late duchess of Somerset (WAM, 12320).

(4) Calendar of State Papers. Milan, 1385-1618, 353. Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond, was to write to Henry VII in 1500-1501, concerning a further approach to the French Parlement, over her 'great mater that soo longe hath been yn sewte' (Cooper, Lady Margaret, 64, 66-7).

(5) Dupont-Ferrier, 'La captivité de Jean d'Orléans', 73.

and Thomas Beaufort had been settled and the Bastard of Somerset released. Moreover, through the influence of Angoulême the family were able to obtain the speedy release of other Englishmen detained in France, Thomas Rempston, John Hanford and William Peyto; the latter two were to become trusted servants of Edmund Beaufort duke of Somerset.⁽¹⁾ The most important of those freed by this means was the earl of Suffolk, a factor which was to contribute to a close connection between the earl and the Beauforts over the next two decades.⁽²⁾ This difficult, often tortuous, maze of ransom negotiations that so preoccupied the Beaufort family was crucial. It mitigated the disaster at Baugé and allowed an extension of family influence. As such it formed a vital background to the participation of the Beauforts in the war in France.

(1) Rempston was another prisoner of Tanguy du Chastel. He was captured at Patay in June 1429 and seems to have been freed by July 1434 (Calendar of French Rolls, 229; PPC, IV, 279). As with the ransom of Thomas Beaufort, Orléans took over the obligations of Edmund Beaufort and other English lords, for the sum of 6,000 écus (AN, K72/56, no.4, f.3^v). Hanford, a prisoner of Pierre Jailliet, captain of Meulan, had been released by 16 March 1444 through the efforts of John duke of Somerset. His ransom of 4,000 salus, and the charge of 225 salus for the expenses of his custody, were again to be met by Orléans (BL, Add. Ch. 12211, 12212). Hanford was later to serve in Normandy under Edmund Beaufort from 1448-50. William Peyto was a former retainer of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick: C. Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp affinity: a study of bastard feudalism at work', EHR, XCV (1980), 517-19. He had been taken prisoner by the French at Dieppe in August 1443. He was given special authority by the duchess of Somerset to receive £500 from the count of Angoulême for the payment of his ransom; the sum was to be deducted from the amount owed by Orléans to the late Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter, and Peyto was bound over to repay this sum to Exeter's executors (PRO, C1/155/53). Peyto had returned to England by December 1445 and was forced to mortgage his manors of Chesterton and Sow (Warwickshire) and Werley (Staffordshire) to meet his recognizances (CCR, 1441-7, 356; Dugdale, Antiquities of Warwickshire, I, 477). The assistance of the Beauforts over the ransom led to a close connection between him and the family. By July 1447 he was acting as the master of Edmund Beaufort's household, and was to accompany him to France in that capacity (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, DR/98/497, 499: I am grateful to Miss A. Sinclair for these two references).

(2) For Suffolk acting as feoffee-to-use for John earl of Somerset see CPR, 1436-41, 433.

TABLE 1 The distribution of the 210,000 écus d'or granted
to the English by the treaty of Buzançais (1412)

To the duke of Clarence, to support the costs of his 'estate'	38,400 <u>écus</u>
To pay for the costs of the troops of Clarence's retinue	114,000 <u>écus</u>
To distribute among the captains and nobles of his retinue for their 'estate'	24,400 <u>écus</u>
To the duke of York for his 'estate'	6,000 <u>écus</u>
To his brother Richard for the same	1,600 <u>écus</u>
To the earl of Dorset for his 'estate'	4,000 <u>écus</u>
To Sir John Cornwall, for his 'estate' and the cost of his troops	21,375 <u>écus</u>
To the victualler and secretary of the duke of Clarence for their costs	225 <u>écus</u>
Total	210,000 <u>écus</u>

The duke of Clarence agreed to distribute the money in the above manner, given under his sign manual and signet on 14 November 1412. The provisions made here (BL, Add. Ch. 1399) are significant in that no separate sums were allocated to either York or Dorset for the costs of their own retinues (this was only specified in the case of Sir John Cornwall). Instead these expenses were included in the amount assigned to Clarence (114,000 écus) for the troops of his army. Thus Clarence was responsible for reimbursing both York and Dorset. On the duke's death these obligations were re-assigned to Orléans as follows:

TABLE 2 The redistribution of the 210,000 écus d'or made in 1422

To the duke of Clarence	120,000 <u>écus</u>
To the duke of York	37,270 <u>écus</u>
To the earl of Dorset	31,355 <u>écus</u>
To Sir John Cornwall	21,375 <u>écus</u>

(From WAM, 12321, f.1^v)

TABLE 3 The final treaty for Angoulême's release guaranteed
by Charles, duke of Orléans on 7 March 1445

To be paid immediately on Angoulême's release: 12,000 salus and the small cross (valued at 4,000 salus), in total 16,000 salus.

For the remainder guarantees were given by the following lords:

Charles, duke of Orléans	20,000 <u>salus</u>
The duke of Alençon	10,000 <u>salus</u>
The duke of Bourbon	10,000 <u>salus</u>
The count of Marche	10,000 <u>salus</u>
The count of Dunois	10,000 <u>salus</u>
The <u>sire</u> de Lohéac	5,000 <u>salus</u>
Total	65,000 <u>salus</u>

(The above payments had been agreed in the treaty at Tours, 12 May 1444.)

In addition, a further payment of 9,844 salus, guaranteed by Orléans to be paid within the year.

Total due for final settlement: 90,844 salus

Furthermore, Orléans was to replace ambiguous or missing receipts concerning sums of a total value of 8,898 salus and to defray any costs which might arise from any action taken by the executors of Edward duke of York concerning the amount still owed him.

(BL, Add. Ch. 3997)

The fact that Orléans stood as final guarantor for the full payment of the whole sum (90,844 salus) entitled the duchess of Somerset to sue his widow in the Parlement case (which commenced in 1480) for the remainder of the debt.

(i) The sources for a reconstruction of military events

A consideration of the later stages of the Hundred Years War draws on two major sources, chronicle accounts and documentary evidence. Some of the chroniclers are worthy of particular mention. The works of Enguerrand de Monstrelet are well-informed on events that came to the notice of the Burgundian camp. The chronicle provides a wealth of detail not found in other sources.⁽¹⁾ Guillaume Gruel, the biographer of Arthur de Richemont, had entered the constable's service in 1425 and accompanied him on all his subsequent campaigns. As one would expect, Gruel does not hesitate to portray his master in the most favourable light but his work, usually derived from first-hand information, is of high value for the military events it relates.⁽²⁾ Gilles le Bouvier, the herald 'Berry', again drew on first-hand knowledge for his chronicle of Charles VII; while favourable to the monarch his account also contains precious detail on the military campaigns.⁽³⁾ On the English side, The Brut gives an unusually full description of the relief of Calais in 1436.⁽⁴⁾

The main body of manuscript material concerns the records kept by the Chambre des Comptes, the French treasury. The principal of these

(1) E. de Monstrelet, Chronique (1400-1444), ed. Douet d'Arcq (Paris, 1957-62, 6 vols.). The chronicles of Monstrelet and Waurin, Recueil des croniques, ed. W. and E. Hardy (Rolls Series, 1864-91, 5 vols.), are virtually identical for much of this period. The primacy of either of these two sources has not been clearly established, but I have chosen to cite the works of Monstrelet in the cases where both accounts are almost the same. For details of the value of Monstrelet as a source, see A. Molinier, Sources de l'Histoire de France des Origines à 1494 (Paris, 1901-6, 6 vols.), IV, 193-4.

(2) Ibid., 255-6.

(3) A new edition has now been brought out, Les Chroniques du Roi Charles VII par Gilles le Bouvier dit le Héraut Berry (Paris, 1979, Société de l'Histoire de France), from which all future references will be made.

(4) The Brut, or the chronicles of England, ed. F.W. Brie (EETS, CXXXVI, 1908), 572-84.

was the receiver-general's account for Normandy and that of the treasurer of France for the remainder of the English possessions.⁽¹⁾ The financing of military affairs was based on a system of muster and review, taken at intervals of three months for garrison troops and every month for those serving in the field. Failure to conform to this procedure would result in non-payment, unless special authorisation was given to treasury officials by the governor or council to cover the irregularity. These mandates themselves form an important source, yielding valuable detail both on the size of the retinues involved, and the circumstances that prevented musters being taken. These situations often arose on field service, where orders might be suddenly changed and new troops recruited or deployed without being reviewed beforehand. From the system of muster and review derived two sources, the muster rolls and the warrants for payment.⁽²⁾

Unfortunately surviving musters for field armies are very rare, though absences from a garrison for service on some military operation were often specified by the commissioners.

Alongside these documents were the receipts, kept by the treasury, from those who had been employed in government service. These quittances could be from a nobleman for the payment of his pension, a captain for

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- (1) An account book of Pierre Surreau, receiver-general of Normandy, survives for the term 1 October 1428 - 30 September 1429 (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488) and is the major source for this period. An account book of Audry d'Espéron, treasurer of war for France, exists from 20 February 1427 - 30 September 1428 (BN, Ms. Fr. 4484). 'France' as opposed to Normandy was used for the large part of north-eastern France that had accepted Henry V only as a result of the Treaty of Troyes.
- (2) The main body of these is deposited in the Bibliothèque Nationale in the collection of 'Montres' (in the section Manuscrits Français, those cited in this present chapter include Ms. Fr. 25769, for the period 1429-31, and Ms. Fr. 25775 for 1438-40), and in the Collection Clairambault; also in the Archives Nationales, série K. Warrants and receipts of payment survive principally in the collection 'Quittances Mandements et Pièces Diverses' (cited in the chapter under BN, Ms. Fr. 26052 et seq.) and again Série K in the Archives Nationales.

the wages of his retinue or a messenger who had been paid for the delivery of news or instructions. The last category often was particularly interesting as a messenger, when claiming his expenses, had to account for the time spent and his exact movements, which sometimes revealed valuable incidental details on events witnessed 'en passant'. Another useful source was the payments made to the vicomtes or their sergeants. These local officials formed an important link in the chain of military organisation, warning local commanders of the whereabouts of the enemy, or supervising the recruitment of carpenters, masons and labourers. The baillis were more actively employed, often taking part in military operations. They had their own retinues and were a vital part of the administration, with a special responsibility for the maintenance of justice and military discipline.

In addition to the surviving contemporary manuscripts, there exist a large number of later transcripts. By far the most important of these is the Collection Dom Lenoir. It was compiled in the eighteenth century, a massive array of copies or summaries of Chambre des Comptes material, and contains much relating to the English occupation of Normandy.⁽¹⁾

(1) C.T. Allmand, 'The collection of Dom Lenoir and the English occupation of Normandy in the fifteenth century', Archives, VI (1963-4), 202-10. The collection exists on microfilm at the Archives Nationales.

(ii) Early war service - a consideration of the period 1427-31

After the death of Henry V at Vincennes in August 1422, control of the English war effort passed into the able hands of the Regent John duke of Bedford. Military success continued; the major victory of Verneuil in 1424 leading to the conquest of most of Maine in the following year. However Bedford was forced to return home at the end of 1425 to attend to the damaging quarrel between Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester and Humphrey duke of Gloucester. The dispute was brought before parliament in March 1426, with reconciliation achieved after Beaufort had been dismissed from the chancellorship. Gloucester's success saw the removal of his rival from domestic government; over the next few years Beaufort was to turn his attention from England to papal affairs. New agreements on council conduct and a final accord between the two parties in November 1426 left the regent free to return to France.

During Bedford's absence, military responsibility had rested with the senior commanders Warwick, Salisbury and Suffolk.⁽¹⁾ The regent's return with fresh reinforcements was to signal a major new offensive. Preparations for his expedition were underway by December 1426, with the bulk of the army composed of retinues of individual captains, including Lords Talbot, Roos, Clinton and Camoys, Henry Bouchier, count of Eu and Sir Edmund Beaufort.⁽²⁾ For Edmund it was to mark his first active

(1) Command of Champagne had been given to Warwick, upper Normandy and Maine to the earl of Salisbury, lower Normandy to the earl of Suffolk. On these provisions, and the successful conduct of the war against Brittany (January 1426 - May 1427) see J.H. Ramsay, Lancaster and York (Oxford, 1892, 2 vols.) I, 364, 373-4.

(2) H.L. Ratcliffe, 'The military expenditure of the English crown, 1422-35' (Oxford M Litt thesis, 1979), 22-3; R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 187.

participation in the war in France. He and his company mustered at the end of February 1427 and shipped across to Calais in the middle of March.⁽¹⁾ His decision to join the army may have owed something to the influence of his uncle, who himself crossed the Channel with his retinue in the same month, and was to stay briefly in France before joining the crusade against the Hussites in the summer of 1427.⁽²⁾ It was however an important occasion to enter the war effort and was regarded with gratitude by Bedford, who was to reward him with the comté of Mortain soon after the expedition reached Paris.⁽³⁾

These new reinforcements from England, combined with troops raised in Normandy, were intended for an assault on the French-held town of Montargis. Montargis was a key fortress between the Seine and Loire; its capture would open up possibilities of English expansion in the Chartrain and Orléanais. However the investment would be difficult: the town occupied a strong natural site, protected by intersecting canals which would force a besieging army to divide into different camps. By 21 May 1427 plans had been laid for the siege. The majority of the army from England was to be committed, with an additional detachment of 200 lances under the earl of Suffolk. Suffolk himself was given overall command, and appointed captain-general for three months in the Chartrain and Vendôme.⁽⁴⁾

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- (1) Edmund's retinue consisted of two knights, forty men-at-arms and 120 archers; one of the knights was John Shardelowe of Suffolk: PRO, E404/43/158 (7 December 1426); Calendar of French Rolls, 245. Musters of the full contingent, with the exception of three of the men-at-arms, were being taken at Sandwich at the end of February 1427 (CPR, 1422-9, 404; Ratcliffe, thesis cit., 23).
- (2) The costs for shipping included both Bedford's troops and the retinue of Cardinal Beaufort: PRO, E403/677 (14 March 1427).
- (3) The army had reached Paris by the end of March 1427: E. Carleton Williams, My lord of Bedford, 1389-1435 (1963), 147-9. The grant of Mortain was made by Bedford at Paris on 22 April (AN, JJ 173, f.315).
- (4) A. de Villaret, Campagnes des Anglais dans l'Orléanais, la Beauce Chartraine et le Gâtinais (1421-8) (Orléans, 1893), 11-14. The phrase 'and the archers' signified the accepted ratio of archers to men-at-arms of 3:1.

Equipment and soldiers were concentrated at Verneuil and the siege commenced on 15 July. Scarcely a week later (21 July) supreme command of the operation passed to the earl of Warwick, who was named captain-general of the war against Montargis and commissioned to raise a further force of 120 lances.⁽¹⁾ An impressive army was now assembled around the town. The strength of the soldiers who had arrived from England was at 178 lances and accompanying archers; of these Edmund Beaufort had the largest retinue.⁽²⁾ He and Lord Camoys were separated in one detachment, Henry Bouchier, count of Eu and Thomas Beaumont in another. The full range of troops was mustered in August, with Warwick's camp holding the road to Burgundy, Suffolk's the road to Châtillon.⁽³⁾

The investment was to be short-lived. A relief force assembled under the French captains La Hire and Dunois, and on 5 September launched a surprise attack on the English camp in conjunction with the townspeople, who flooded the canals. The result was a debacle, the English were routed and suffered over 600 casualties.⁽⁴⁾ The ignominious disintegration of the siege ended Edmund's first involvement in the war; he probably returned to England on the expiry of his six-month term of indenture.

Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, was to encounter a similar lack of success in his own endeavours abroad. He had crossed over to

(1) Villaret, op.cit., 16-29.

(2) Edmund count of Mortain, with a force of one knight banneret, 36 men-at-arms and 155 archers, was serving under the earl of Suffolk (BN, Ms. Fr. 4484, ff.69, 69^v).

(3) Villaret, op.cit., 30.

(4) Ibid., 32-3; Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, 1405-49, ed. A. Tuetey (Paris, 1881), 221.

France as newly appointed papal legate for Bohemia, Hungary and Germany, to organise the crusade against the Hussites, and had received the cardinal's red hat from Bedford at Calais on 25 March 1427.⁽¹⁾ Leaving Bedford at Amiens he had spent several months in Rouen before passing on to Germany to join the crusading army in the summer.⁽²⁾ The cardinal arrived in time to witness the crushing defeat of the crusaders at Tachov on 4 August; the ill-disciplined soldiers fleeing in panic before the Hussite army.⁽³⁾

The failure at Tachov convinced Cardinal Beaufort of the need to recruit a new army from England. After continuing his diplomatic activities in Europe, and a brief stay in Rouen during the summer of 1428, he had returned to England by September of the same year.⁽⁴⁾ Negotiations over

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- (1) The Brut, 433-4. He had been appointed legate on 18 March 1427: G. Holmes, 'Cardinal Beaufort and the crusade against the Hussites', EHR, LXXXVIII (1973), 721.
- (2) On 28 March, at St. Omer, Bedford had written to the chapter at Rouen concerning a forthcoming meeting between Beaufort and Cardinal Rochetaillée (ADSM, G2125, f.72^v). Bedford and Cardinal Beaufort were received by the townspeople of Amiens the same day, after which the two parted company (Archives Communales d'Amiens, BB3, f.68^v; CC21, ff.67, 93-7). Beaufort had arrived in Rouen by 8 April (ADSM, G28). He met Rochetaillée before the latter went to Rome in May: Ch. de Beaurepaire, Recherches sur le Procès de Condamnation de Jeanne d'Arc (Rouen, 1869), 50-54. Although Beaufort engaged in minor military and administrative duties (organising a retinue for the guard of the bridge at Rouen on 1 June 1427: BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 8602, no.3) his attention was on the forthcoming crusade against the Hussites. He had recruited a small force from soldiers in Normandy, and had left France and was at Malines in Brabant by 15 June (Holmes, loc.cit., 723).
- (3) Beaufort had joined the papal army on 28 July (Holmes, loc.cit., 723).
- (4) The cardinal had first decided on the need for a new army from England in March 1428, while in Bruges as a guest of Duke Philip of Burgundy (Holmes, loc.cit., 727). After spending the summer in Rouen he returned to London in September where he was met by his nephew Edmund count of Mortain: ADSM, G29; Amundesham, Annales monasterii S. Albani, ed. H.T. Riley (RS, 1870-1, 2 vols.) i, 26.

the new crusading army had commenced in December 1428 and on 18 June 1429 the cardinal's proposals were formally answered by the English council.⁽¹⁾ He was to indent for a force of 250 lances and 2,500 archers, or a lesser number 'within the moderation of the said Cardinal'.⁽²⁾ None of these troops were to be recruited from France. He was allowed to appoint a constable of the army, to marshal the soldiers, punishing infractions of discipline. These arrangements provided a new post for the cardinal's nephew Edmund, who together with Robert Lord Willoughby had been granted permission to serve as captain of the new army.⁽³⁾

The proposed crusade came at a time of mounting difficulty in France. On 8 May 1429 the siege of Orléans had finally been abandoned.⁽⁴⁾ The English forces had fallen back to the Loire fortresses of Beaugency, Jargeau and Meung only to meet with further setbacks. On 12 June Suffolk was captured at Jargeau; on 18 June the English army was defeated at Patay and both Talbot and Scales were captured. The regent was now confronted with a major crisis. French morale, encouraged by the dramatic advent of Joan of Arc, was high; the English soldiers were fearful and demoralised.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Holmes, loc.cit., 738-9.

(2) PPC, III, 330-38.

(3) The cardinal had been appointed captain of the English forces going to fight the heretic Bohemians on 18 June 1429; Edmund and Robert Lord Willoughby were given licence to fight in the army the same day (Calendar of French Rolls, 262). They were the principal commanders of the army (Amundesham, Annales, i, 39).

(4) R. Pernoud, La Libération d'Orléans (Paris, 1969), 142, and for the capture of Jargeau and defeat of the English at Patay, ibid., 149-55.

(5) Bedford, recalling these military disasters to the English council in 1434, saw the arrival of Joan of Arc as the fundamental reason for the collapse (PPC, IV, 223). There was considerable disarray after Orléans and Patay, with many desertions among the English troops, 'par crainte de la pucelle': A. and S. Plaisse, La vie municipale à Evreux pendant la guerre de cent ans (Evreux, 1978), 121.

Reinforcement from England became a matter of compelling urgency. In these circumstances Cardinal Beaufort agreed, on 1 July 1429, to divert his army to the aid of Bedford, to serve in France for six months.⁽¹⁾ Horses and equipment were hurriedly assembled for the expedition, at a strength of fifty lances and 950 archers, which crossed the Channel in mid-July.⁽²⁾

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- (1) PPC, III, 339-44. The rapid sequence of events was described in The Brut, 450: 'The wheche Cardynale was ordained and purpast for to have gone in-to Prage, to have dystroyed and gyf batayle un-to the fals herytykes and Lollardys. And whene he was rydy, tydynges come that the sege of Orlyaunce was brokyn, And the Lord Talbot takyn, and other worthy lordys. And a-none, in all hast, the Cardinall with hys meyne, And Ser Iohn Ratclyff with hys meyne, that was purposed for to have gone in-to Gyene, went ouer in-to Fraunce to help and strenghe the Regente'.
- (2) Little information survives concerning the recruitment for this expedition. Troops were being gathered in London by proclamation; they were quartered in Kent while they waited for transport ships: Calendar of the letter books preserved among the archives of the corporation of the city of London: Letter book K, ed. R. Sharpe (1911), 99; R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 188. However the size of the army was considerably overestimated by contemporary chroniclers at a strength of between 4-5,000 men (Monstrelet, IV, 334; Chronique d'Antonio Morisini, IV, 169-71; Journal de Clément de Fauquembergue, II, 316). Modern writers have assumed the army was at a strength of 2,750 men from the indenture with the council on 18 June (R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 188; B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 55). In fact the indenture was for a force of 250 men-at-arms and 2,500 archers or a number 'withinne the moderation of the said Cardinal' (PPC, III, 339-44). The size of the army was further obscured by the complicated arrangements for the payment of the force (discussed in Holmes, loc.cit., 742-9). On 5 July the English council had agreed to pay Beaufort £2,431 for his second quarter's wages. As pointed out by H.L. Ratcliffe (thesis cit., 36-38) such a sum indicated that the army was far smaller than the figures mentioned in the indenture. Ratcliffe, assuming a ratio of men-at-arms to archers of 3:1, calculated the size at around 600 men. In fact the army consisted mostly of archers. The exact composition of the expedition, 50 lances and 950 archers, was given in the receiver-general's account for Normandy (1428-9) where a contribution towards the army's wages had been made on 13 August 1429 (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, f.198). 1,500 horses were hurriedly assembled for the army on 14 July (Holmes, loc.cit., 741, n.5). According to The Brut, the cardinal's force, 'a notable meyny of Archers, the best that couth be geton in euery place of Englonde', crossed the Channel at mid-summertide (ibid., 450, 568). It shipped at Sandwich: PRO, E403/689 (14 July).

After landing at Calais, the cardinal's army marched through Picardy, stopping briefly at Amiens, before reaching Paris on 25 July.⁽¹⁾ The timeliness of this assistance, at a time of great military peril, was noted by contemporaries, and was gratefully received by Bedford.⁽²⁾ It had represented a considerable sacrifice by Beaufort, effectively putting an end to his papal ambitions.⁽³⁾ In return the cardinal was given a prominent role in the administration of France and Normandy. On 29 July, in consideration of his services in bringing a 'grant puissance' to the aid of Normandy, he was granted a monthly pension of 3,000 livres tournois. On 3 August he departed for Rouen, where he took on an active role in the administration of the duchy.⁽⁵⁾ However the cardinal's influence was no more than that of an important councillor, and the vital matter of military planning and disposition remained in the hands of the regent.

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- (1) Letters were sent to the English council telling of Beaufort's arrival in France, on 19 July 1429 (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, f.754). Provisions for the army were gathered at Amiens, where it stopped briefly on 21 July, and a presentation of wine was made to the cardinal (Archives Communales d'Amiens, CC23, ff.75, 79^v). For the arrival of the cardinal's army in Paris on 25 July see AN, X^{1a} 1481, ff.16, 17, cited in Journal de Clément de Fauquembergue Greffier du Parlement de Paris 1417-35, ed. A.Tuetey, H. Lacaille (Paris, 1903-13, 3 vols.), II, 316; also Journal d'un bourgeois de Paris, 242.
- (2) 'And so, by his comyng theder, was savid all that lande; and elles that tyme it shuld have been lost' (The Brut, 568). The timely assistance of the cardinal was recalled with appreciation by Bedford in 1434 (PPC, IV, 223).
- (3) The cardinal still styled himself legate of Germany after his arrival in France (eg. a letter to the vicomte of Avranches, 31 August 1429: Bibliothèque Municipale de Reims, Collection Tarbé, Carton V, no.15). However the pope was greatly angered by the diversion of the crusade and in September ordered Beaufort to stop wearing the insignia of papal legate (Holmes, loc.cit., 742).
- (4) BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, ff.616-17.
- (5) The cardinal left Paris only with the members of his household; his troops were put at the disposal of the regent (Journal de Clément de Fauquembergue, II, 317). Beaufort was at Mantes on 8 August and had reached Rouen by 13 August, from which date he was sitting regularly on the Norman council (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, ff.748, 751 et seq.). The cardinal took on a major responsibility in the administration of the duchy and was in frequent contact with the regent in Paris (ibid., ff.758-60; Amundesham, Annales, i, 42).

The fresh troops were desperately needed by Bedford. Further French successes in the Champagne, Picardy and the Île de France had culminated in the crowning of Charles VII at Reims on 17 July. There were real fears of a new offensive, either against eastern Normandy or Paris.⁽¹⁾ The regent deployed the reinforcements from England as best he could. A detachment under John Radcliffe was sent to strengthen the capital while Edmund, count of Mortain, was given an important new command covering the frontier of eastern Normandy. On 2 August Edmund was appointed 'connetable de l'ost et armee du Roi au royaume de France' with a monthly pension of 250 livres tournois.⁽²⁾ In part this was a product of the influence of the cardinal, whose negotiations with the council at Rochester (1 July) had confirmed that his right to appoint a constable for his army would stand in France.⁽³⁾ However the office was broadened by Bedford to include an area of specific military responsibility. He commissioned Edmund as king's lieutenant 'pardeca la Riviere de Seine en Normandie' and gave him command of the important frontier captaincies of Neufchâtel-en-Bray, Gournay and Gisors in the Norman Vexin.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Large numbers of the enemy were reported in the region of Evreux during August (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, f.755). On the general threat to Paris in early August from the forces of Joan of Arc and the duke of Alençon, see J.H. Ramsay, Lancaster and York, I, 402-4.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, ff.617-18. Radcliffe, who had brought 95 men-at-arms and 700 archers over to France in the middle of July, was to reinforce Paris while Edmund was given command of the field army: PRO, E403/689 (14 July); BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, f.618.

(3) PPC, III, 339-44.

(4) BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.13. The earliest surviving muster roll of the three Vexin fortresses that gives Edmund as captain is for Neufchâtel (3 November 1429): BN, Ms. Fr. 25768/428. However a later document establishes that he was given all three captaincies in August 1429. A mandate from the Grand Conseil (28 August 1430) describes Edmund as having held Neufchâtel, Gisors and Gournay for over a year (BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.11).

Bedford made consistent use of the office of lieutenant during his regency, for it was always his policy to identify his leaders with certain districts.⁽¹⁾ The appointment was given added urgency by the military situation in eastern Normandy. The English position in the northern Vexin was held by a line of fortresses running along two rivers, Eu, Blangy and Aumale on the Bresle, Gisors and Gournay on the Epte. Both Blangy and Aumale had fallen to the French at the time of the arrival of the cardinal's army and the English had withdrawn to a line behind the river Arques. Further south, the French had infiltrated between Gisors and Gournay causing further losses: in September Étrépagne and Dangu, in October Torcy. To combat these reverses Edmund was given a commission both defensive, to hold the key fortresses of Neufchâtel, Gisors and Gournay, and aggressive, to counter-attack the enemy and win back occupied towns.⁽²⁾ He was not expected to take up the task of garrison supervision; this was delegated to his lieutenants.⁽³⁾ But the post marked a definite area of military operation.

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- (1) Lower Normandy had frequently been the responsibility of the earl of Suffolk, while Fastolf had been entrusted with the governance of Maine: B.J. Rowe, 'John duke of Bedford as regent of France, his policy and administration in the north' (Oxford B.Litt thesis, 1928), 50-57. The command of Neufchâtel, Gisors and Gournay was often entrusted to important commanders, viz. the earl of Arundel in 1432, Arundel also being appointed lieutenant between the Seine and Somme on 11 December 1432: S. Deck, La ville d'Eu (1151-1475) (Paris, 1924), 46; A. Baume, 'Des aspects militaires de l'occupation anglaise de la Normandie pendant la deuxième partie de la guerre de cent ans' (thèse de troisième cycle, Paris 4, 1978), 68. An état (such as the grant to Edmund of 250 livres tournois a month) was often granted to a commander about to commence a new campaign. For example the earl of Salisbury leading an army against Orléans in 1428, was granted 500 livres tournois a month: R.A. Newhall, 'Bedford's ordinance on the watch of September 1428', EHR, L (1935), 48.
- (2) His authority was 'tant pour la sauvegarde de places de gisors gournay et neufchatel comme pour faire guerre aux ennemis de france' (BL, Add. Ch. 364). These important garrisons formed a reservoir of troops which could be committed to reinforce an army in the field: Dom Bodin, Histoire de Neufchâtel-en-Bray (Rouen, 1885), 65. For a general discussion of the military situation see Beaurepaire, Recherches sur Jeanne d'Arc, 6.
- (3) Clement Lasire was Edmund's lieutenant at Neufchâtel (BN, Ms. Fr. 25768/428), John Topclif at Gisors (AN, K63/10/19, 22; ADE, IIF 4069). No muster rolls survive for Gournay.

Towards the end of August, Cardinal Beaufort and other Norman councillors set out from Rouen on an urgent tour of the fortifications in the Pays de Caux.⁽¹⁾ Bedford remained in Paris, where a French assault was imminent. Saint-Denis, evacuated by its Burgundian garrison, had been occupied by the duke of Alençon and Joan of Arc on 25 August. At this time of crisis a large loan from the cardinal, pledged on the security of the regent's own jewels, was necessary to pay the troops which had been hastily gathered together for the city's defence.⁽²⁾ The English position was serious but they were to be saved by the feeble conduct of Charles VII. Charles, perhaps fearing the growing reputation of Joan of Arc, failed to provide any sort of effective support for the assault on Paris, and when the attack came (8 September) it was comfortably beaten off. Furthermore, he failed to despatch an army to Normandy, which allowed the English to consolidate their position, and return to the offensive.⁽³⁾

By the middle of September the troops of Edmund count of Mortain were mustering at Gisors, Gournay and Neufchâtel.⁽⁴⁾ On 22 September the

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- (1) The cardinal, the abbot of Mont-Saint-Michel and other Norman councillors had left Rouen on 25 August to inspect new fortifications at Harfleur. After a rapid visit to Dieppe Beaufort had returned to Honfleur early in September. There followed a tour of lower Normandy; the cardinal was back in Rouen by 2 October, when he despatched instructions to the captain of Carentan concerning recruitment for his garrison (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, ff.646-7; Amundesham, Annales, i, 43; Bibliothèque Municipale de Reims, Collection Tarbé, Carton V, no.15; BN, Ms. Fr. 20327, f.148).
- (2) Beaufort loaned the regent 9,388 livres tournois early in September for the payment of troops assembled for the defence of Paris. It was made on the security of Bedford's own jewels: BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, ff.199, 679-80; J. Stevenson, Letters and papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry the sixth (RS, 1861-4, 2 vols. in 3), II, i, 141-4; L. Radford, Henry Beaufort (1908), 194-6.
- (3) E. Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont (Arthur de Bretagne), 1393-1458 (Paris, 1886), 175-6.
- (4) BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, f.633.

regent sent orders to Edmund, at Neufchâtel, concerning the English counter-attack.⁽¹⁾ A field army, led by Mortain and Willoughby, consisting of the soldiers from England and retinues from the Norman garrisons was to invest Étrépagny (north of Gisors), which had been recovered by the French early in September.⁽²⁾ The inhabitants of the French-held town of Beauvais witnessed the rapid deployment of Mortain's troops against Étrépagny, and sent an urgent message to the French commander of the region, the count of Clermont, to come to the aid of the town 'de pouvoir a faire lever le siege pour donner exemple a autres bonnes villes de avoir secours'.⁽³⁾ Despite this appeal, no relief force was to arrive, and the English were allowed to continue their offensive unchecked.

By October, with the danger to Paris considerably lessened, Bedford came to an important agreement with the duke of Burgundy over the defence of the city. On 13 October 1429, in a full meeting of the Grand Conseil, Duke Philip was appointed governor of Paris, an arrangement that allowed the English to concentrate all their resources on Normandy.⁽⁴⁾ The greater co-operation with the Burgundians was largely due to the efforts of the

(1) Ibid., f.780.

(2) Norman garrison troops present at the siege included Andrew Ogard, captain of Vire, and his retinue (BL, Add. Ch. 11726). With the musters of these soldiers being delayed Mortain and Willoughby made a loan of 600 livres tournois to the various captains to provide payment for their men. This 'prest' was certified by the cardinal and had been reimbursed by the Norman treasury on 26 October 1429 (BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.4; Collection Clairambault 208/9). For the location of this, and other towns in the campaigns of 1429-31, see Map 1.

(3) R. Rose, Inventaire Sommaire des Archives Communales de Beauvais antérieures à 1790 (Beauvais, 1887), 10.

(4) ADN, B302, 15570/6. Present were Bedford, the cardinal, Duke Philip, the bishops of Paris, Beauvais, Noyon and Evreux, the abbot of Mont-Saint-Michel, Lord Scales, Sir John Popham and Sir John Fastolf. In addition to the government of Paris were surrendered the charge of Chartres, Melun, Sens, Troyes, Amiens and the Vermandois.

cardinal, who had paid Philip a rapid visit after his landing at Calais in July, which had led to an earlier agreement (28 July) securing assistance in the defence of Paris.⁽¹⁾ A few days after Philip's appointment, the English left the city for Rouen.⁽²⁾

In the meantime the army of Edmund, count of Mortain, had achieved its first success when the garrison of Étrépagne surrendered.⁽³⁾ Edmund then moved his troops on to the nearby town of Dangu. Additional artillery was despatched by Bedford early in November to assist the siege, and the town seems to have fallen soon afterwards.⁽⁴⁾ While these small gains were encouraging, the English position was still very serious. The military successes of the French, the widespread fear of Joan of Arc among the English soldiers, and the propaganda value of Charles's coronation at Reims all needed countering. At the end of October the regent decided to send an embassy in all possible haste to London to the parliament in session. It was to be headed by Cardinal Beaufort, accompanied by the bishop of Beauvais and the abbot of Mont-Saint-Michel, 'pour remonstrer les estat et necessite de ce Royaume la Puissance des ennemis et autres choses'.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) ADN, B1942, second account book, f.8, et seq.; R. Vaughan, Philip the Good (1970), 17 .
- (2) According to the account of the Chronique Normande de Pierre Cochon, ed. C. de Beaurepaire (Rouen, 1870), 305, the cardinal 'avoit autant de gens d'armes comme ledit duc de Bedford'. From this date until Henry's coronation in Paris in December 1431 the Grand Conseil and the Norman council were in effect amalgamated: B. Rowe, 'The Grand Conseil under the duke of Bedford, 1422-35', in Oxford Essays in Medieval History presented to H.E. Salter (Oxford, 1934), 224.
- (3) With no help forthcoming from Charles VII the French made a composition with the English captains at the end of October (Chronique Normande, 304; Monstrelet, IV, 367-8).
- (4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26052/1164. A petition of John Thornesson, an English esquire, referred to war service under the count of Mortain at Gisors, Étrépagne and Dangu (BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1490).
- (5) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 1482, no.53. The embassy was about to leave Rouen for England on 23 October (ibid., no.54). Just before the cardinal's departure (26 October) the regent appointed him captain of Caen (BN, Ms. Fr. 22468, no.44).

The departure of the embassy had, however, a far wider significance. It was to initiate the bold plan, devised by Bedford, to bring the young king Henry to France, accompanied by a large army, and crown him in Paris.⁽¹⁾ A coronation in England was necessary first; it took place on 5 November 1429, and preparations commenced for the recruitment of a major new expedition.⁽²⁾

While the cardinal had returned to England his nephew remained active in the war effort. Edmund's half-year term of indenture had expired in December 1429, but the regent, on 22 December, commissioned him for another three months' service, with a mounted retinue of two knights banneret, forty lances and 220 archers.⁽³⁾ These troops, all from the army from England, had been retained to do Bedford field-service wherever directed. This kind of mobile force was not uncommon on the frontiers, and was a response to conditions of unrest among the local population and raids, infiltration and surprise attacks by the enemy.⁽⁴⁾ However the muster of Edmund's retinue was to be delayed considerably. At the end of January it was decided to detach Thomas Kyriell, with twenty lances and sixty archers, to assist the siege of Torcy.⁽⁵⁾ The castle of Torcy, north of Rouen, commanded the route from Gisors to Dieppe. Earlier in January pionniers and manouvriers had been mobilised in the Pays de Caux to construct

(1) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 189-90.

(2) Ibid., 190-1.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26052/1243; *Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises* 1482, no.66.

(4) R.A. Newhall, Muster and Review (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 128.

(5) BN, *Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises* 1482, no.66 (26 January 1430). In the interim the half-year's indenture of Mortain's retinue had expired and he had been forced to pay his troops' wages himself. He was reimbursed on 29 January (BL, Add. Ch. 364; BN, Ms. Fr. 26052/1342).

bastilles around the fortress.⁽¹⁾ Kyriell's force was intended to cover this operation. The remaining twenty lances and 160 archers were to be retained by Edmund. Commissioners were ordered to review the troops of Mortain and Kyriell at Gournay on 27 January 1430, it being specified that the contingent was separate from the regular garrison of Gournay, also under Edmund's command.⁽²⁾ However the soldiers were finally mustered at Gisors on 17 February.⁽³⁾

Edmund was soon to be committed to further military action. The important fortress of Château-Gaillard had fallen to a surprise French attack on 24 February.⁽⁴⁾ The regent despatched Mortain, Sir John Fastolf and other captains to commence the siege in March.⁽⁵⁾ A complete blockade was the only means of reducing this strong fortress, a difficult operation further complicated by the presence of a strong French garrison at Louviers. Bedford made use of a large number of boats to guard the Seine between Vernon, Gaillard and Rouen and to prevent the French at Louviers from crossing the river.⁽⁶⁾ While the regent directed the investment from Rouen Edmund, appointed 'connetable de l'armee de France', was given overall command of the troops assembled at the siege.⁽⁷⁾ Ordnance and

(1) S. Deck, La ville d'Eu, 43; A. Baume, thesis cit., 64-67.

(2) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 1482, no.67.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 25769/467.

(4) Beaucourt, Charles VII, II, 36.

(5) Mortain and his retinue had arrived at Gaillard by 20 March 1430 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26053/1297). See also Chronique Normande, 311, n.1.

(6) Baume, thesis cit., 81.

(7) His office is referred to in BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.10. Edmund's commission of service was renewed for another quarter on 30 March 1430, though his retinue was reduced to twenty men-at-arms and sixty archers (ibid., no.9).

supplies were regularly sent to him, barrels of powder for the cannon, new pipes and wire cords for the crossbows.⁽¹⁾ Towards the end of May he was to receive ominous news from Thomas Gower, the bailli of Evreux. English spies had observed a large number of enemy soldiers massing at Louviers under La Hire and other captains, 'pour intencion de aller frapper sur ledit siege'.⁽²⁾ However the effectiveness of the river blockade prevented the relief force from arriving and when the regent brought up further reinforcements in June the castle quickly capitulated.⁽³⁾

While the siege of Gaillard was being carried out the young king and his accompanying army had at last arrived in France. The royal entourage, which had included the dukes of York and Norfolk, and the earls of Warwick, Stafford, Devon, Arundel, Huntingdon and Ormond, with a force of around 5,000 men, had reached Calais on 23 April.⁽⁴⁾ The general instability of the Pays de Caux prevented the king from immediately proceeding to Rouen. Instead he remained at Calais while his troops assisted in the reduction of Aumale and Torcy, after which he reached Rouen on 29 July.⁽⁵⁾ The arrival of Henry altered the authority of Bedford, whose office of regent ceased while the king remained in France, government instead being undertaken by the king's council.⁽⁶⁾ This arrangement marked a renewal of

(1) Ibid., no.10.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 1383 (Gower), no.5 (26 May 1430).

(3) Chronique Normande, 311. A quittance for the wages of Edmund's retinue of 18 June spoke of 'au siege nagueres estant devant Gaillard' (BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.13). The ending of the investment left Edmund free to attend to his own interests. On 20 June he arranged a small loan (200 livres tournois) from the Norman treasury (BL, Add. Ch. 3666).

(4) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 190-1; Ratcliffe, thesis cit., 60.

(5) Chronique Normande, 312.

(6) Rymer, X, 456-7. The composition of the Grand Conseil was to be supplemented by those members of the English council crossing to France with the king. Foremost among them was Beaufort, who contributed a large loan of nearly £10,000 towards the costs of the coronation (Griffiths, Henry VI, 119).

the influence of Cardinal Beaufort, who had accompanied the king across the Channel and was to be a principal member of the Grand Conseil over the next two years.⁽¹⁾

The cardinal's active participation in the French administration gave added momentum to the rapprochement between England and Burgundy. In February he had negotiated an important new treaty whereby Duke Philip was granted the appanage of Brie and Champagne, in return for agreeing to serve the English for a year with a force of 1,500 men.⁽²⁾ This new arrangement strengthened military co-operation between the two countries. Burgundian troops had commenced the siege of Compiègne on 20 May, and four days later had captured Joan of Arc as she attempted to relieve the town. Negotiations with the Burgundians resulted in an agreement for Joan to be purchased by the English for the sum of 10,000 livres tournois.⁽³⁾ English and Burgundian forces were working together in a number of different areas, with a detachment under the earl of Huntingdon present at Compiègne and a force under Jean de Luxembourg guarding Meaux. At the end of August the Grand Conseil decided on a new initiative that would provide an important post for another of the cardinal's nephews, Thomas, who had returned to France only a few months after his release from captivity.

(1) Rowe, 'Grand Conseil', 232-4.

(2) ADN, B302, 15570/8; C.A.J. Armstrong, 'La double monarchie France-Angleterre et la maison de Bourgogne (1420-1435): le déclin d'une alliance', Annales de Bourgogne, XXXVII (1963), 107. The English were to subsidise the Burgundian war effort (see Vaughan, Philip the Good, 17-18, though here the terms of the treaty are not given correctly).

(3) A. Sarrazin, Jeanne d'Arc et la Normandie au quinzième siècle (Rouen, 1896), 23. She was finally delivered to the English in November 1430. Tried at Rouen, she was burnt on 30 May 1431.

In the spring of 1430 one of Duke Philip's councillors, Hugh Lannoy, had drawn up a memorandum of the strategic possibilities accorded by the arrival of the young king's army in France. These had included the despatch of a strong English force to aid the Burgundian captain Perrinet Gressart on the Loire frontier.⁽¹⁾ Gressart, captain of the fortress of La Charité-sur-Loire, near Nevers, had already beaten off a French assault under Joan of Arc in the winter of 1429. Reinforcing Gressart's position was seen as an effective way of diverting French troops.⁽²⁾ By 26 August it had been decided to send Thomas Beaufort, newly created count of Perche, to La Charité with a substantial retinue of 120 lances and 360 archers, which was mustered at Rouen and had left the city by the end of the month.⁽³⁾ This was an important command for Thomas, who was to receive a monthly pension of 200 livres tournois.⁽⁴⁾ The new post had been created at a time of financial difficulty for the French administration and was only made possible by a number of new loans by the cardinal.⁽⁵⁾ The weight

(1) Vaughan, Philip the Good, 23.

(2) Ibid., 22.

(3) BL, Add. Ch. 11671, 11672.

(4) Ibid.

(5) An old bond of 2,000 livres tournois was re-allocated on 26 August 1430 in an attempt to cover Perche's wages (BL, Add. Ch. 371-2). On 30 August the cardinal loaned another 1,000 livres tournois towards his nephew's expedition, part of a large loan to the French administration of 8,600 nobles and 3,000 livres tournois. This covered all facets of the war effort. 6,000 nobles were to pay English troops serving at Compiègne, 2,000 nobles for general affairs of government and 600 nobles towards the costs of purchasing 'la Pucelle', while 2,000 livres tournois were to be sent to Jean de Luxembourg, guarding Meaux (BN, Ms. Fr. 20327, no.150). Careful arrangements were made concerning the repayment of this loan. 10,000 livres tournois were to be returned by Michaelmas, 4,000 livres tournois by the end of October and 4,000 livres tournois at the end of each subsequent month until the debt was completely repaid. The sum was to be converted into the English noble at the French treasury's expense.

of influence that Cardinal Beaufort gained through his vital financial assistance to the war effort brought rewards both to himself and his nephews.⁽¹⁾

At a time when the strategic situation was rapidly changing, Thomas's terms of service did not commit his force to a long-term deployment on the Loire front, merely stating 'a la charite sur loyre et ailleurs ou Il nous plaira'.⁽²⁾ His soldiers had only been advanced one month's wages, and after these expired the troops were moved elsewhere. By 10 November he and a smaller retinue were performing defensive duties in Paris, which

(1) On 14 July the cardinal had secured an order of council to the French treasury to pay him 6,000 livres tournois of his pension due for November and December 1429 (BN, Ms. Fr. 20327, no.149). Although the grant of the monthly pension of 3,000 livres tournois made on 29 July 1429 was for the term of half a year, it was only supposed to stand while the cardinal was in France (BN, Ms. Fr. 4488, f.616-17). Despite this Beaufort was in receipt of the sum by 16 August 1430 (BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.14). The cardinal's attendance at a meeting of the Grand Conseil on 28 August 1430 was no doubt influential in securing his nephew Edmund a very favourable alteration to the terms of his captaincy of Neufchâtel, Gisors and Gournay. The revenues of these three towns, along with Vernon and Pontoise, had been granted to the widowed Queen Catherine as part payment of her dower. Edmund had complained that this detachment from the ordinary fiscal system (Catherine was allowed to appoint her own officers) had resulted in long delays in the payment of the garrison's wages. The council acceded to his request to transfer their administration to the Norman treasury, an arrangement that was to allow Edmund, as general governor of the region, to collect the profits of the town revenues himself. Such an income included the surplus gains of war of the garrisons as well as appatis and guets levied on the inhabitants for the purposes of defence: BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.11, and for the general background, C. de Beaurepaire, De l'administration de la Normandie sous la domination anglaise, (Caen, 1859), 26-7. For the delivery of 600 livres tournois from Edmund's lieutenant at Neufchâtel, Nicholas Meldicrost to his steward Thomas Prost, due for the year finished September 1430, see BN, Pièces Originales 1913 (Meldicrost). The cardinal's own influence in the duchy was strengthened by his appointment as captain of Honfleur on 20 September 1430 (BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 1482, no.97).

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 20327, no.150.

had been restored to an English governor, the earl of Stafford.⁽¹⁾ In the meantime the Burgundians had suffered a number of military reverses. On 24 October a relief force under the count of Vendôme had raised the siege of Compiègne; on 20 November a small Anglo-Burgundian army was defeated at Guerbigny.⁽²⁾ On receiving the news Duke Philip at first had intention of offering the French battle, and summoned Stafford, Arundel and other English captains to his assistance.⁽³⁾ Thomas, count of Perche, accompanied Stafford, but the English reinforcements were not committed to battle and by December had returned to Normandy.⁽⁴⁾

The wide-ranging war service of Thomas Beaufort reflected, in the closer co-operation with Burgundy, a more ambitious phase on the conduct of the war. However the main military priority for the English remained the securing of their position in Normandy, and after the successful recovery of Aumale, Torcy and Château-Gaillard they were ready to commence the siege of Louviers. Preparations for an investment had begun in October 1430, with plans for the assembly of an army under Thomas, duke of Norfolk, Lords Scales and Willoughby and Jean de Robessart.⁽⁵⁾ However it was felt that the force was insufficient for the siege, for since the town's

(1) He had been commissioned to serve there from 10 November 1430 for the limited period of fifteen days, with a retinue of four lances and fifteen archers (BN, Collection Clairambault, 11, no.159).

(2) Monstrelet, IV, 421-4.

(3) Ibid., 426.

(4) Perche was present at Amiens on 27 November, along with Stafford, Arundel, Willoughby and Fastolf (Archives Communales d'Amiens, CC24, f.79^v). The chronicler Chastellain, Oeuvres, ed. K. de Lettenhove (Brussels, 1863-5, 7 vols.), II, 133-35, describes the defeat of a small force sent out under Perche and Louis de Robessart; there is no mention of this in Monstrelet's account.

(5) Beaurepaire, Recherches sur Jeanne d'Arc, 25.

capture by La Hire in December 1429 it had been refortified and now had a strong enemy garrison. Fresh reinforcements from England were considered necessary, and with this in mind the cardinal returned home accompanied by his two nephews at the end of the year.⁽¹⁾ All three were present at the parliament at Westminster in January 1431 when the recruitment of the new troops must have been discussed.⁽²⁾ A fresh loan from the cardinal underpinned the new military preparations and established a prominent role for his nephews Thomas and Edmund.⁽³⁾ Both had sealed indentures by 8 February for retinues of 125 men-at-arms and 460 archers; some two months later (19 April) they were appointed captains of the other companies assembling under Lords Audley and FitzWalter.⁽⁴⁾ They sailed from Sandwich to Calais towards the end of April.⁽⁵⁾ The cardinal crossed to Normandy several weeks later, after having attended an important meeting of the English council (1 May) which had reaffirmed the need to capture Louviers before the coronation of Henry VI could be undertaken.⁽⁶⁾

While these preparations were underway, the Grand Conseil at Rouen had been making its own military provisions. At the end of March 1431 a

(1) Edmund had resigned the captaincy of Neufchâtel on 26 December 1430, from which date the earl of Huntingdon took possession (BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.17).

(2) Amundesham, Annales, i, 58.

(3) The cardinal had offered no less than £15,674; see Griffiths, Henry VI, 119.

(4) PRO, E404/47/166, 168 (8 February 1431). The second quarter's wages were paid out on 16 March (PRO, E403/696). Thomas and Edmund were appointed captains of all the retinues assembling at Sandwich for the limited period of one month (Rymer, X, 493). Full details of the different detachments are given in Ratcliffe, thesis cit., 76-77.

(5) Gregory's Chronicle in The historical collections of a citizen of London in the fifteenth century, ed. J. Gairdner (Camden Soc., new series, XVII, 1876), 172.

(6) The conclusions of the council also stressed the importance of maintaining the Burgundian alliance, though the terms under which it might continue were to be examined carefully (Griffiths, Henry VI, 192). The cardinal was to cross to Harfleur soon afterwards, from where he returned to Rouen (The Brut, 569).

force was assembled from the Norman garrisons, at a strength of 300 lances and the archers, under various captains, Willoughby, Standish and Harrington. This small army was to be deployed in preliminary operations, demolishing pockets of resistance in the area around Louviers, until the arrival of the troops from England.⁽¹⁾

After reaching Calais the counts of Perche, Mortain, Lords Audley and FitzWalter, with retinues totalling some 2,000 men, marched through Picardy, reaching Amiens on 1 May.⁽²⁾ The English leaders remained in the town for over a week, involved in discussions with the Burgundians and the recruitment of gunners and workmen for the forthcoming siege.⁽³⁾ They had arrived in Rouen by the middle of the month and both Thomas and Edmund indented for small personal retinues on 18 May.⁽⁴⁾ It was usual for a man of estate or an important commander to have his own retinue; a mark of respect for the Beauforts who were to take on overall responsibility for the siege. The counts of Perche and Mortain were to be accompanied by the royal master of ordnance Phielbert^{de} Moulans, who was to assist them in the carriage of their guns and advise them over their

(1) Beaurepaire, Recherches sur Jeanne d'Arc, 27-8.

(2) Archives Communales d'Amiens, CC24, f.88.

(3) Ibid., ff.88^v-90. 'Pionniers machons et ouvriers de fosses' were assembled from the town on 3 May, followed by crossbowmen and gunners and carpenters. Amiens had its own guilds for these different professions, and as part of their obligation towards the town they were liable to be impressed for military service: A. de Calonne, Histoire de la ville d'Amiens (Amiens, 1899-1901, 2 vols.), I, 320. Mortain and Perche had left the town by 9 May (Archives Communales d'Amiens, CC24, f.90).

(4) Thomas had the larger retinue, fifteen lances and forty-five archers, Edmund fifteen and twenty-five (BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1584, 1585).

deployment around the town.⁽¹⁾ They had left Rouen on 18 May and reached Louviers the same day.⁽²⁾

In the surrounding area the companies from the Norman garrisons were gathering. Perche and Audley reviewed many of these retinues at Orbec on 25 May.⁽³⁾ On 31 May both Perche and Mortain passed the musters of one of the last contingents to arrive under Lord Willoughby.⁽⁴⁾ A small delay before the investment commenced was caused by absences from Willoughby's retinue, which left the force from the Norman garrisons (400 lances and their archers) understrength. A messenger despatched from the Grand Conseil at Rouen instructed Thomas to make up the numbers by recruiting an additional company of fifteen men-at-arms and forty-five archers.⁽⁵⁾ This last minute arrangement was to cause Thomas problems over the payment of the troops; he had to borrow the money for their wages until musters had been taken and payment guaranteed at the end of June.⁽⁶⁾ The siege was underway by the beginning of June and with an army of over 3,000 men the English were confident of success. Passing through Evreux on his

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1582. Such an arrangement was normal for major sieges. The master of artillery would be competent not only on matters of deployment of cannon but also their haulage and the construction of protective trenches around the guns: M. Vale, War and Chivalry (1981), 143.

(2) Beaurepaire, Recherches sur Jeanne d'Arc, 30, n.1.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 25769/595-97.

(4) BL, Add. Ch. 11722.

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1601.

(6) On 3 June Thomas had borrowed 446 livres 17 sols 6 deniers tournois from Philibert Odenau for the payment of his troops; the newly recruited company was mustered at the end of the month (BN, Pièces Originales 1526; Ms. Fr. 26053/1374).

way to Louviers the captain Mathew Gough informed the local inhabitants that the town would soon be in English hands.⁽¹⁾

The organisation of the siege was directed by the Grand Conseil at Rouen. While the regent was occupied in the general defence of Paris the cardinal remained in regular attendance, and provided further small loans, both for the expenses of the king's household and towards the costs of the operation at Louviers.⁽²⁾ Command of the siege itself rested solely with Edmund, count of Mortain, after his brother Thomas was forced to withdraw from combat, though whether he was wounded or fell ill is not clear. In a quittance for wages on 5 July Edmund spoke of troops 'darrainement admenee par notre beaufriere le Conte du Perche'.⁽³⁾ Thomas was to die in France on 3 October 1431.⁽⁴⁾ Edmund, styled 'lieutenant du Roy et cappitaine audit siege', now had general military responsibility for the investment.⁽⁵⁾ No French relief force had arrived, and the

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- (1) 'disoit que ladicte ville de Louviers estoit en voye d'estre du brief reduite en ceste obeissance, fust par composition ou autrement' (Archives Communales d'Evreux, CC10, nos.1, 2).
- (2) Beaufort was sitting regularly on the council at Rouen during the summer and autumn of 1431 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1601, 1627, 1630). Further small loans advanced by the cardinal included one for the siege of Louviers in September 1431 (Bodleian Library, English Ch. 21). The cardinal was generally recognised as the most important member of the Grand Conseil, comparable in influence only to the regent himself, as was shown by many of the petitions from the Norman towns, personally addressed to either Beaufort or Bedford (Archives Communales de Lisieux, CC1, Register 3, ff.24, 26; Archives Communales d'Evreux, CC10, nos.3, 4). The cardinal's household also remained based in Rouen (there is a reference to his usher in ADSM, G32, f.22^v), but virtually nothing survives concerning rewards and grants made by him to his own servants. One, a grant of a house in Harfleur, the Rose-Blanche, to an old retainer of his brother the duke of Exeter, is recorded in Beaurepaire, Recherches sur Jeanne d'Arc, 15, n.2. The délais of the Norman treasury show members of his household held lands in France (eg. Thomas Thornton, in 1433: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.329) but the means of acquisition is not specified.
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1611.
- (4) PRO, E404/48/298.
- (5) BN, Ms. Fr. 25770/628 (a muster of newly-arrived troops on 21 September 1431, on the orders of the count of Mortain).

despatch to the siege of reinforcements under the earls of Warwick and Stafford settled the issue.⁽¹⁾ On 22 October Louviers surrendered and orders were given for the demolition of its fortifications.⁽²⁾

The capture of Louviers, and Bedford's efforts to clear the Seine valley between Mantes and Paris, allowed plans for the much delayed coronation to go ahead. Edmund, count of Mortain, had returned to Rouen in November where he settled some debts for goods bought in Paris and Evreux.⁽³⁾ He was one of the many lords that accompanied Henry on his state entry into Paris on 2 December 1431 and attended the coronation finally held on 16 December.⁽⁴⁾ Two days later he did homage to the king for his comté of Mortain.⁽⁵⁾ Edmund and his small personal retinue remained in attendance about the king through January 1432.⁽⁶⁾ In February he, the cardinal and many other English lords returned with the young king to England.⁽⁷⁾

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- (1) This new force was assembled at Pont-de-l'Arche on 29 September (BN, Ms. Fr. 26054/1650).
- (2) T. Bonnin, Cartulaire de Louviers (Evreux, 1870-83, 5 vols.) II, 116.
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26055/1680.
- (4) Mortain's entry into Paris, as one of the lords accompanying the young king, is noted in a herald's account in College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 48, ff.270-2. For his attendance at the coronation see Monstrelet, V, 5.
- (5) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 43, f.385. Another ceremonial occasion that Edmund was present at, in the company of the regent, his uncle the cardinal and all the principal English lords, was the king's formal opening of the Paris Parlement on 21 December 1431 (AN, X^{1a}4796, f.294^v).
- (6) Edmund and a retinue of ten lances and thirty archers served about the king for a period of two months (included in a petition to the parliament of 1432 concerning arrears of wages for the lords and their retinues in attendance on the king during his coronation: PRO, SC8/144/7182).
- (7) On 17 May 1432 the Grand Conseil granted him respite for performing homage for his seigneurie of Appilly because he was serving the king in England (BN, Ms. Fr. 26055/1817).

The period from 1429-31 was the only occasion that Cardinal Beaufort participated in the government and administration of France. His own influential position established his nephews in the forefront of the war effort. For Edmund it had proved a creditable initiation to the responsibilities of military command, at a time of difficulty and crisis. His record of good service, and the growing influence of the cardinal in matters of foreign policy, were to pave the way for more important posts and greater rewards from the war in France.

(iii) The Relief of Calais, 1436

After the king's return to England in February 1432 the war continued without any notable success for the English forces. The collapse of the siege of Lagny, further losses in Maine and Ricarville's daring but short-lived capture of Rouen underlined the weaknesses in the English position. Proposed peace negotiations at Calais in 1433 never materialised but some reappraisal of the strategy of the war was felt necessary. Such consideration aroused a quarrel between Bedford and Gloucester over the priority the defence of Calais should receive. After defending his record before the English council in 1434, Bedford's point of view, that Calais should be subordinate to the needs of France and Normandy, eventually prevailed, and he was appointed lieutenant of the town and captain of the fortresses in its march. But Gloucester, in emphasising the particular needs of Calais, had championed a very popular cause that had widespread support.⁽¹⁾ The regent was less successful with his proposals for the funding of a permanent Norman field force from English revenues, and his own return to France with fresh troops was only made possible through a number of large loans.⁽²⁾

In the meantime the Burgundian alliance was steadily deteriorating. Duke Philip had concluded a general truce with Charles VII in December 1431, and had become further alienated from Bedford through the latter's marriage to Jacquetta of Luxembourg after the death of his wife Anne in 1432.⁽³⁾ The final break occurred at the Congress of Arras in September 1435, when

(1) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 194-6.

(2) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 77-78.

(3) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 193.

a Franco-Burgundian alliance radically altered the balance of power in northern France. Combined with the death of Bedford in the same month (14 September) it provoked a major crisis, with the English military position under serious threat. Already in September the French captains Xaintrailles and La Hire had conducted a raid on the vicomté of Arques. On 16 November Dieppe was captured in a surprise attack by Charles des Marest. While a serious peasants' revolt commenced in the Pays de Caux, further losses occurred to the French troops. On 24 December Fécamp was taken; in January 1436 Harfleur, Tancarville, Montivilliers and Lillebonne were all captured.⁽¹⁾

On the death of Bedford governing authority in Normandy had been temporarily delegated to the Norman council, with provision for the duchy's defence resting with the senior captains Talbot, Scales and Willoughby. Rouen was in grave danger but the peasants were defeated by Talbot and the French offensive lacked vigour. Gisors was lost, but ~~re~~captured again.⁽²⁾ The situation still remained very serious. Paris was dangerously isolated, and there were fears of a Burgundian attack on Calais. A strong military answer was needed from England, combined with a new designation of military authority necessary after the death of the regent.

On 1 November 1435 new provision for Calais was made with the appointment of Humphrey duke of Gloucester as lieutenant of the town and march.⁽³⁾ Sir John Radcliffe was despatched to Calais as Gloucester's

(1) S. Deck, La ville d'Eu, 50-51.

(2) Pollard, thesis cit., 155-159.

(3) Rymer, X, 624.

deputy and measures commenced to strengthen the town against possible Burgundian attack.⁽¹⁾ The plight of Normandy was equally pressing. In a letter to the Norman estates of 3 December 1435 the king had announced that substantial reinforcements were being raised for the duchy under the duke of York and the earls of Suffolk, Salisbury and Mortain.⁽²⁾ It was too late to save Paris and the Île de France. Pontoise and St. Germain-en-Laye were recovered by the French early in 1436. The English forces in Paris, under the command of Lord Willoughby, were now hopelessly isolated; they surrendered on 17 April 1436.⁽³⁾

Early in 1436 three new armies were being recruited. The largest was under the duke of York, who on 20 February 1436 had indented for a force of one baron, one banneret, seven knights, 490 men-at-arms and 2,200 archers.⁽⁴⁾ Faced with the necessity of reviving military high command in France, certainly until Henry VI came of age the English council had adopted the compromise measure of appointing York king's lieutenant in France and Normandy for the limited term of one year only.⁽⁵⁾ He was to be supported by an army under the earl of Salisbury of three bannerets, seven knights, 250 men-at-arms and 1,040 archers.⁽⁶⁾ However the third expedition, under Edmund, count of Mortain, was intended for an altogether different purpose.

(1) Griffiths, Henry VI, 202.

(2) C. de Beaupaire, Les états de Normandie sous la domination anglaise (Evreux, 1859), 52-53. Mortain had not participated in the war effort since his return to England in 1432. He had accompanied his uncle the cardinal as one of the ambassadors at the Council of Basle in 1434 (Calendar of French Rolls, 300).

(3) Ramsay, Lancaster and York, I, 480.

(4) PRO, E403/721.

(5) The terms of York's governing commission were drawn out in a council meeting of 8 May 1436 (BN, Ms. Fr. 5330, f.137).

(6) PRO, E403/721 (20 February 1436).

Unfortunately neither the indenture nor the commission of service for the new army survive, but the entry on the warrant for the payment of the first quarter's wages (which would have been copied from the original indenture) is particularly interesting. It refers to Edmund undertaking war service in Anjou, Maine and Sonnois, and 'othre cuntrees nowe out of our obeissance in our Reaume of France for and during the space of two years'.⁽¹⁾ The unusually long term of commission, to launch a new offensive against the French in Anjou and Maine, indicated Edmund had been appointed to an important new command.⁽²⁾ The antecedent of such a plan of campaign lay in the memorandum submitted to the English embassy at Arras by Bedford's master of household Sir John Fastolf, concerning the future management of the war. Fastolf had advocated avoiding the long-drawn-out sieges that had been so wasteful of both time and money, instead using mobile field armies to harry and waste enemy lands.⁽³⁾ In his proposals for the use of these troops he had included the despatch of a substantial contingent (500 lances and the archers) to the borders of Normandy to wage war upon Anjou, Maine and the Chartrain, a course of action which would also deter Brittany from any hostile actions and reinforce the Norman garrisons in the area.⁽⁴⁾ This strategy had already been successfully pursued in the campaigns of the earl of Arundel from 1433-34. Arundel had been appointed 'lieutenant general de faire la guerre entre la Seine, la Loire et la mer' on 1 June 1433, and had

(1) PRO, E404/52/196 (16 January 1436). The bailliage of Sonnois, the area around Mamers (Sarthe), was on the march of Normandy and Maine, but part of Maine's administration.

(2) The contents of the commission and indenture were referred to retrospectively in a council memorandum of 17 April 1437, '... to see the olde endentures of the erle of Mortain for Anjou and Maine and also his articles and to report the difference betwyx hem' (PPC, V, 15).

(3) The memorandum is printed in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 575-85.

(4) Ibid., 579-80.

waged war in Maine and Anjou to great effect, recovering Bonsmoulins, Saint -Céneri, Sillé-le-Guillaume and Beaumont-sur-Sarthe and devastating French lands up to the Loire.⁽¹⁾ Fastolf, himself governor of Anjou and Maine at this time, was probably recalling Arundel's campaign when he drew up his memorandum, and a similar command may well have been intended for Edmund.

Edmund was in London during December 1435 and the details of the expedition were probably under discussion at this time. Although the indenture was not sealed until mid-January orders for the arrest of shipping and mariners for his army had gone out a month earlier.⁽²⁾ To undertake the new offensive he was to recruit a substantial army, two barons, six knights, 400 men-at-arms and 1,600 archers.⁽³⁾ The importance of the command was marked by a number of royal grants, specifically referring to his good service in the wars in France. In a meeting of the English council on 9 December 1435 he was granted the office of captain of the town and castle of Aberystwyth in mid-Wales.⁽⁴⁾ On 23 December came an exceptional endowment, the grant of the rich comté of Harcourt in eastern Normandy, previously held by the Regent Bedford.⁽⁵⁾

Preparations for Edmund's expedition were underway well in advance of the other two armies bound for Normandy, under York and Salisbury.

(1) AN, K63/24, no.3. For Arundel's campaign see Ramsay, Lancaster and York, I, 462-3.

(2) PRO, E403/721 (16 December 1435).

(3) PRO, E404/52/196.

(4) The grant is filed in PRO, E28/56.

(5) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 75, f.5.

His principal captains were Roger Lord Camoys, Sir William Ashton and Sir Geoffrey Warburton.⁽¹⁾ By the beginning of April 1436 orders were sent out to take the musters of the troops at the port of Winchelsea.⁽²⁾ With three armies assembling on the south coast the financial outlay was considerable and the Beaufort family again contributed substantial loans to the hard-pressed Lancastrian government.⁽³⁾ However despite the influence of the cardinal and the military justification for Edmund's new command, the proposed campaign was to be dramatically diverted at the very last moment. With news arriving of Burgundian plans to raise a large army to besiege Calais, Gloucester succeeded in re-routing the army to reinforce the town's garrison, as was related in The Brut:

'And sone afterward, Edmond, Erle of Morteyn, and the Lord Camys, Sir William of Ashton, knyghte, And Sir Geffrey Werburton, knyghte, shuld haue shippit att Wynchilsey to haue gon into Fraunce with the nomber of iij M men of speres and Archers; but because there was so gret a noys of ye seege comynge to Caleis, thei were contirmaundit be the Kyng and the Duyke of Gloucestre to go thider, and strenghe the toun till rescous myght be had. And so went the Erle with his Armee to Caleis.' (4)

The garrison strength of Calais, under Gloucester's lieutenant Sir John Radcliffe, was some 600 men, divided between the town and the surrounding marcher fortresses; with the military situation rapidly deteriorating the defence of Calais became the immediate priority. It was with this

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- (1) The Brut, 574. The payment of the second quarter's wages revealed a shortfall in the aristocratic contingent hoped for; no barons or bannerets and only three knights had actually been recruited: PRO, E403/723 (10 May 1436). Roger Camoys was generally styled 'lord', though he was never summoned to parliament or created peer by patent. The barony of Camoys had fallen into abeyance on the death of Hugh de Camoys on 18 June 1426 (CP, II, 508, 512-13). As far as the exchequer was concerned Camoys was to receive the standard rate of payment for a knight rather than a baron. Recruitment for Mortain's army was continuing from February - April 1436 (Calendar of French Rolls, 308-11).
- (2) CPR, 1429-36, 533. The musters were to be taken on 2 April 1436.
- (3) These included £6,666 13s 4d from Cardinal Beaufort (15 February 1436) and £4,000 from the captive John, earl of Somerset, on 15 March (Rymer, X, 632; A. Steel, Receipt of the Exchequer, 208).
- (4) The Brut, 574.

new objective that Edmund's army crossed the Channel soon after Easter.⁽¹⁾ The record sources confirm the account of the sudden change of the army's destination. A petition to the English council by the master of ordnance in Normandy, William Gloucester, related how he had waited in vain at the expedition's planned port of disembarkation, Honfleur, before taking a balinger to Calais, where the soldiers had now arrived.⁽²⁾ By mid-May the English council informed Raoul le Sage in Rouen of the military situation; the army of the count of Mortain had already crossed the sea, those of York and Salisbury were awaiting favourable winds.⁽³⁾

Edmund, after reaching Calais commenced a vigorous series of raids into Burgundian territory. At the end of April messengers had reached Duke Philip in Holland, and the towns of Ghent and Bruges, reporting the arrival of Mortain's expedition.⁽⁴⁾ Spies sent from St. Omer revealed the disconcerting news that the army was already in the field.⁽⁵⁾ Edmund's first attack was on Boulogne, burning the suburbs of the town and shipping in the harbour.⁽⁶⁾ A second raid, into West Flanders, burnt and plundered as far as Loos and seized large numbers of cattle. An attempt by the Flemings to intercept the raiders was decisively defeated.

(1) Gregory's Chronicle, 178. Easter day was on 8 April 1436.

(2) Gloucester's petition, dated 12 May 1436, is filed under PRO, E28/57.

(3) This letter of 14 May 1436 is also filed under PRO, E28/57. York was not in fact to arrive in Normandy until 7 June (P. Johnson, thesis cit., 61).

(4) Pursuivants carrying news 'touchant la descendue du Conte de Mortaing a Calais' had reached Duke Philip on 26 April, the town councils of Bruges and Ghent two days later (ADN, B1957, ff.163^v-4, 456^v).

(5) Ibid., f.457.

(6) The Brut, 575; Monstrelet, V, 231.

The success of this military action raised morale both in Calais and in England, and was regarded with special appreciation by the young king himself, who, hearing the news ordered the Garter to be sent to Mortain at Calais.⁽¹⁾ A third raid, under Edmund's lieutenants, Camoys and Ashton, reached Ardres, but was surprised by Picard troops on its return, only the stalwart efforts of Lord Camoys averting a rout and beating off the attackers.⁽²⁾

These initiatives by the English forces demoralised the Burgundians and delayed final preparations for the siege of Calais. The coastal towns appealed to Philip for protection against further raids, and troops had to be specially recruited to resist the activities of the English, 'qui nouvellement sont descenduz a Calais en grant nombre et qui deja ont boute les feux es pais de Boullemais es flandres'.⁽³⁾ Time was crucial, as preparations for a major relief force under the command of Gloucester had commenced in June, with a nationwide appeal both for funds and as many troops as possible.⁽⁴⁾

The Burgundian forces finally assembled during the last two weeks of June and met with some success in reducing the outer fortresses of the Calais march. Oye surrendered quickly; Marck after a stiffer

(1) The Brut, 575. The king ordered the Garter to be sent to Mortain on 5 May (Rymer, X, 640).

(2) Ibid., 575-6; Monstrelet, V, 238.

(3) Final arrangements for the siege of Calais had been made on 9 May. However a special force had to be commissioned, to muster at St. Omer on 28 May, to protect the Flemish towns from further English attacks (ADN, B1957, ff.164, 165^v-66).

(4) K.H. Vickers, Humphrey duke of Gloucester (1907), 248-9.

resistance capitulated on 5 July.⁽¹⁾ Balingham and Sangatte fell shortly afterwards, and only the garrison of Guines, forced to abandon the town, still held out in the castle.⁽²⁾ These successes allowed Philip to commence the siege of Calais itself (9 July) with all his troops now in position.⁽³⁾ However the naval blockade of the town failed completely. The fleet was delayed several weeks, and on arriving outside the harbour on 25 July, made ineffective attempts to obstruct the entrance before sailing away two days later.⁽⁴⁾ Sensing the demoralising effect of this on the besiegers Mortain, on 26 July, launched a surprise sally across St. Peter's Plain defeating the contingent from Bruges in a sharp skirmish. Two days later another attack by Mortain and Camoys destroyed an enemy bastille.⁽⁵⁾ This reverse discouraged the troops from Ghent, who abandoned the siege during the night of 28-29 July.

In the interim Gloucester's massive relief force had assembled at Sandwich. Gloucester himself, the duke of Norfolk, the earls of Huntingdon, Warwick, Stafford, Devon and Ormond and Lords Hungerford, Welles, Beaumont and Cromwell, headed an army at a strength of nearly 8,000 men.⁽⁶⁾ The expedition, which had been retained for the limited period of one month, finally set sail at the end of July.⁽⁷⁾ However the

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- (1) On the loss of Oye Mortain suspected treachery and ordered the execution of William Bulleyn, one of the garrison, for spying for the enemy (The Brut, 577). Edmund had reinforced Marck with a company under the command of Christopher Barton (ibid.). The English prisoners were taken back to Ghent and patrols sent out to assess the strength of the English at Calais (ADN, B1957, ff.172^v-73).
- (2) M. Thielemans, Bourgogne et Angleterre: relations politiques et économiques entre les Pays-Bas Bourguignons et l'Angleterre, 1435- 1467 (Brussels, 1966), 94-95. For the location of these fortresses see Map 2.
- (3) Ibid.
- (4) R. Vaughan, Philip the Good, 77-79.
- (5) The Brut, 580; Monstrelet, V, 253. This chronology is preferred to that of Gregory's Chronicle (179), which gives a far earlier date for the attack on the bastille, 12 July.
- (6) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 204.
- (7) Ibid.

army they were supposed to face was already melting away. Philip and the remainder of his troops had abandoned the siege on 29 July, leaving behind provisions and ordnance. When Gloucester and the main body of his army arrived in Calais on 2 August, the siege was over.⁽¹⁾

Gloucester now took the offensive. Leaving Mortain as temporary captain of Calais, he embarked on a brief punitive raid into Flanders.⁽²⁾ Crossing the river Gravelines on 6 August he spent some eleven days plundering and burning the surrounding countryside before returning to Calais, and then England at the end of the month.⁽³⁾ The threat to Calais had passed.

In an episode of the war that restored a certain measure of national pride Edmund emerged with greatly enhanced military reputation. Contemporaries gave him much of the credit for the relief of the siege.⁽⁴⁾ His successful role in the defence of Calais was also reflected in a number of ballads. In one, 'Mockery of the Flemings', his skirmish on his cattle-raid (near Gravelines) was used by the composer to deride the enemy as burghers not soldiers.⁽⁵⁾ In another, 'Scorn of the Duke of Burgundy' (a 'flyting' directed against a particular person's reputation), Mortain and his army were agents of retribution for Philip's falsehood. A third, 'The Siege of

(1) Ibid., 204-5. Duke Philip had learnt of Gloucester's arrival through a spy in the town on 3 August (ADN, B1957, ff.180-180^v).

(2) According to Thielemans, Bourgogne et Angleterre, 100, n.210, Mortain was one of the captains on Gloucester's brief campaign. However entries on the victualler's account for Calais reveal that Gloucester had left Mortain as captain of the town during his absence (PRO, E101/192/10).

(3) Thielemans, Bourgogne et Angleterre, 101-4.

(4) Gregory's Chronicle, 178-9; J. Hardyng, Chronicle, ed. H. Ellis (1812), 396, gives Mortain all the credit for the raising of the siege; as for Gloucester, 'he rode into Flanders a little waye and little did to count a manly man'.

(5) R.H. Robbins, Historical poems of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (New York, 1959), 83-86.

Calais', a minstrel's 'tail-rhyme', described his victorious sortie that broke the siege.⁽¹⁾ His appearance in a number of different types of poem and ballads is significant. It indicates that his part in the proceedings was well-known and that he was something of a popular hero.

More importantly, Henry VI was to remember his service with especial gratitude. The Burgundian defection and attack on Calais had left a deep impression on the young king, and Edmund's promotion to earl of Dorset, officially confirmed on 28 August 1442, specifically referred to his fruitful service 'in the rescue of the town of Calais against attack by the self-styled duke of Burgundy and the rebels his partisans'.⁽²⁾ These circumstances were to ensure Edmund royal favour and further commands in France after the king's minority officially ended in November 1437.

(1) Ibid., 78-83, 86-89. I am grateful to Professor John Scattergood for discussing these poems with me.

(2) CChR, VI, 34. For the impact of Duke Philip's defection on the young Henry VI, see B.P. Wolfe, Henry VI, 82-83.

(iv) Government and the War in Normandy, 1438-1440

Richard duke of York was to remain in Normandy as king's lieutenant-general for a little over a year. He was replaced by Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who finally arrived in the duchy in November 1437. Warwick represented a compromise in the problem of finding a more permanent successor to the Regent Bedford. A man of considerable prestige and military reputation, his appointment was widely acceptable, both to the administration in England and in France. However the earl was now in his fifty-fifth year, and as events were to prove, was not likely to initiate a vigorous offensive against the French.

Active military responsibility was, as under York, delegated to the experienced and successful field commander John Lord Talbot. Talbot had recovered Tancarville, after a difficult siege, in November 1437, opening the way for a fresh offensive in the Pays de Caux at the start of the new campaigning season. The despatch of reinforcements from England offered the possibility of further advances in this region. In the event, no clear direction was provided over the shape of war strategy, and the army's commander, Edmund Beaufort, count of Mortain, was to use the troops for an altogether different purpose.

The return of Edmund Beaufort to France in 1438 was to mark a new delegation of military authority. Its circumstances were however both confused and controversial. A revival of Edmund's original commission of 1436, to serve the king in Anjou and Maine, was being discussed by the council in 1437, without any further commitment being undertaken.⁽¹⁾ No

(1) PPC, V, 15; an examination of the indenture and articles of the earl of Mortain respecting Anjou and Maine. The reference was to the old indenture, ie. the original one in 1436.

decision was to be reached that year; Edmund himself was to travel over to France on private business connected with his brother's ransom at the end of April 1437.⁽¹⁾ Early in 1438 the king and English council decided on the despatch of substantial reinforcements to the war effort in France. Gloucester's command of Calais having lapsed, a new lieutenant was appointed, Lord Dudley, and an expedition fitted out under the command of the earl of Huntingdon.⁽²⁾ A further force was prepared under Edmund count of Mortain who indented with the king for half a year's war-service, with an army of one banneret, two knights, 350 men-at-arms and 1,350 archers.⁽³⁾ The entry of the warrant to the exchequer (which would have been taken from a copy of the indenture) gave the area of his service as Normandy, without adding any other detail.

If the new army was for the general purpose of reinforcing the war effort in the duchy, it was a sensible measure. Indeed saltpetre and other provisions were to be taken over to the garrisons there.⁽⁴⁾ However the indenture had been drawn up before Warwick, the lieutenant-general, had made his report on the deployment of forces, and thus lacked proper information on the military needs of the duchy. Moreover a new commission of authority granted to Edmund on the same date (22 March 1438)

(1) Calendar of French Rolls, 318.

(2) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 457.

(3) PRO, E404/54/175 (22 March 1438). Recruitment for the army was being carried out from April 1438 (Calendar of French Rolls, 321-3).

(4) PPC, V, 94: 33 barrels of saltpetre to be delivered by the earl of Dorset for the use of garrisons of France and Normandy. According to The Brut, 472, the army's purpose was to reinforce Normandy.

(5) Newhall, Muster and Review, 150: Warwick's despatch of this report had been delayed until April 1438.

as the payment of his first quarter's wages, implied a different use for the expedition.

Unfortunately the commission, which survives in the form of a contemporary transcript, is incomplete. It pertained to the revival of the command and administration of English-held Maine, the post of king's 'captain general and governor'.⁽¹⁾ The office of captain-general and governor of Anjou and Maine had been in abeyance since the death of Bedford. This area of responsibility, which even at the zenith of the English war effort had encompassed only a very small part of Anjou, was now limited to those areas of Maine still under effective military control. In 1438 the English still occupied three key fortresses at Ste-Suzanne, Mayenne and Le Mans. Each formed a separate administrative unit, with the parishes in each paying a quarterly surety (assessed as 3 salus d'or, ie. 12 salus each year) as the appatis, required to cover the expenses of the military protection they were offered. Safe-conducts to merchants, members of the religious communities, and all those who travelled between French and English areas of occupation, were also charged for. These revenues were, theoretically, ploughed back into defence.

The governance of Maine had been entrusted by the regent to the master of his household, Sir John Fastolf. Fastolf, together with Lord Scales and Sir John Montgomery, had been appointed as a lieutenant, with wide military powers, to assist in the reduction of Maine in 1424.⁽³⁾ Further

(1) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, f.90.

(2) For details of the administration of Maine, based on a surviving account roll for 1433-4, see S. Luce, Le Maine sous la domination Anglaise (Paris, 1878).

(3) College of Arms, M16, ff.121-121^v (25 August 1424).

to this, Bedford in a special mark of favour, had delegated the administration of the province to him; in letters given at Paris, on 11 March 1425, he was appointed captain-general and governor.⁽¹⁾ His authority, both civil and military, was to be supreme in the areas under his control. Fastolf's commission empowered him to negotiate the surrender of fortresses and to issue pardons and safe-conducts. He was able to summon workmen (masons, carpenters and the like) to assist in sieges, to requisition merchandise (provided reasonable compensation was made), to punish infractions committed by his own troops. As such it differed little from the powers delegated to other lieutenants in the field. But Fastolf was also to have authority in matters of military administration in general, normally the prerogative of Bedford himself. He was able to establish new garrisons, both in Maine and Anjou, and decide on their strength, and to demolish or construct fortifications as he saw fit.⁽²⁾ He was empowered to issue the indentures for all his captains, thus deciding on the strength of their retinues, and the conditions of their service. Moreover he was to receive full authority in civil matters, and was to appoint administrative officers, the receivers of finances, justices and all other posts.

This commission represented a unique area of authority, separate both from the administration of Normandy and the Pays de Conquête, and that of 'France', the area that had accepted Henry V's rule through the Treaty of Troyes rather than from force of arms. It had its own council at Le Mans, and a completely independent financial organisation.⁽³⁾ Its

(1) College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 26, ff.59-63.

(2) There is a list of fortresses, 'non tenables et tenables', in Anjou and Maine, from Fastolf's collection of papers in College of Arms, M16, f.123.

(3) Maine had its own receiver-general at Le Mans. For details of the revenues collected, the dispositions of the garrisons and other aspects of the administration see Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 549-56.

revival in favour of Edmund Beaufort represented an important new command, especially since Edmund was also to have the right to make land grants from those properties returned to the royal demesne.

The grants made by him on his arrival in France showed that his terms of commission allowed him small landed donations from the comté of Maine. This appanage, where not committed in private property rights, had passed back into the hands of the crown after Bedford's death. When other holdings reverted to the demesne, through death of the owner or confiscation, Edmund had the authority to re-allocate them subject to ratification by the Norman treasury.⁽¹⁾ He was thus able to reward his own servants and officers, an important source of patronage.

Renewing this command was, as far as the prosecution of the war was concerned, both necessary and important. Fastolf himself, on his return to England in 1435, had advocated the need to renew military activity in the province. It was also to prove controversial in circumstances when both Maine and Normandy were in competition over the allocation of new funds or troops. It was a difficult but prestigious post and it seems to have marked Edmund's promotion to earl of Dorset. It is on documents concerning the preparations for the expedition that he is first styled as

(1) In one such grant, made by Edmund Beaufort at Alençon on 20 September 1439, as captain general and governor of Anjou and Maine (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 27, f.455) lands worth 80 livres tournois in the comté of Maine (which had reverted to the crown) were given to John Maidstone 'son serviteur et familier domestique'. It was confirmed by royal letters from Rouen on 15 March 1440. References to other grants occur in ADSM, Rouen Tabellionage, 1439-40, to John Nanfan (f.103), Henry Barton (f.187). Edmund was using his title of 'captain general' from his arrival in France in 1438: BN, Pièces Originales 1017 (Dorset)/2.

such, though his rank was not officially confirmed until August 1442.⁽¹⁾ This promotion before the expedition of 1438 was known and recognised by contemporaries.⁽²⁾ It was a sign of the special royal favour attendant on the new commission. Henry VI had taken an increasingly active role in matters of government from 1437 onwards. Edmund's appointment, made at Maidstone on 22 March, served as an indication of the king's growing preference for the Beaufort family in matters of foreign policy. It was also symptomatic of Henry's failure to provide a firm direction of the war effort. The command was to create conflict between the needs of Normandy and Maine, division that was to have unfortunate consequences both in 1438 and 1443.

In addition to the post of governor of Maine, Edmund was also appointed captain of Alençon. Although the indenture for this does not survive it is apparent from Norman records that the command was to take effect from 1 March 1438, indicating that the indenture was sealed in England as part of the preparations for the new campaign.⁽³⁾ This was important in strategic terms. Alençon was one of the major garrisons of Normandy (its regular strength was twenty mounted lances, twenty foot and 120 archers) and its position in the south of the duchy on the main route to Le Mans made it an essential base for any operations in Maine itself.⁽⁴⁾ Soon

(1) Indicating an oral confirmation by the king to be subsequently ratified by patent or charter. Edmund was styled earl of Dorset in the warrant for the payment of the first quarter's wages on 22 March 1438 (PRO, E404/54/175).

(2) 'Ande in the same yere the Erle of Mortayne was made Erle of Dorsette, and he was sentte unto Anjoye and Mayne' (Gregory's Chronicle, 181). The same commission may have been referred to in Benet's Chronicle, 186, but it mistakenly described the army as shipping to Aquitaine. The French offensive in Gascony may have been discussed by the council and Edmund (PPC, V, 100), but the port of disembarkation was Cherbourg and the army never penetrated beyond the Loire.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26064/3589.

(4) The garrison's strength is given in a number of muster rolls during Dorset's captaincy: BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1503; AN, K66/1/57. Dorset was to hold this command until after York's arrival in 1441. Edmund's lieutenant at Alençon, Hugh Stanlaw, surrendered the captaincy to Richard Woodville on 24 October 1441 (ADO, A412).

after his arrival in France, Edmund's pursuivant-at-arms, 'Cadron', was sent from Alençon with orders for the captain of Mayenne: other messengers were constantly on his service to and from the town.⁽¹⁾ It also marked a further dispersal of patronage, for under the terms of his office Edmund was to receive the income from the guets, the payments made by the inhabitants in the parishes around the castle towards the cost of keeping the watch.⁽²⁾ Normally this was collected and kept by royal officials, usually the vicomte, in the receipt of the Norman treasury. A grant to a captain was a sign of special favour, equivalent to a regular pension, and Edmund appointed one of his own stewards as his lieutenant.⁽³⁾

Preparations for the new expedition was underway from March. Orders were sent out to arrest shipping and Edmund gave instructions to one of his servants in Normandy to collect some military equipment for his arrival.⁽⁴⁾ The army assembled at Poole and after a number of weeks delay, caused by a lack of shipping, finally crossed over to Cherbourg in June.⁽⁵⁾

An army under Talbot was being raised in eastern Normandy during May 1438 to renew military operations in the Pays de Caux. However the

(1) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 21289/142.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26064/3589.

(3) A quittance of William Power (one of Edmund's stewards) referred to a journey made to Rouen and then to Alençon to take possession of the captaincy for the count of Mortain (25 February 1438): AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.77. Considerable repairs were carried out on the castle over the next year including improvements to the captain's rooms (ADO, A409, 410).

(4) On 21 March 1438 Edmund Beaufort had ordered one of his servants in Normandy, Thomas Clerc, to buy 'cent tymbres' (helmet-tops) for the forthcoming campaign: BN, Pièces Originales 775 (Clerc).

(5) Musters were taken at Poole early in May (CPR, 1436-41, 197). However not enough shipping had assembled to take across Dorset and his whole retinue. A deputy was to be appointed to take charge of the first contingent that could be shipped across (PPC, V, 102). The second quarter's wages were paid out on 28 May for a force of one banneret, two knights, 342 men-at-arms and 1280 archers. The same day expenses were met for men and horses being brought from London to Poole, and for the arrest of shipping. An entry on the issue roll for 19 June noted that Dorset's force was now in Normandy (PRO, E403/741).

disembarkation of Dorset's forces in the Cotentin was to signal a completely different area of activity for the expedition. Passing through western Normandy, a brief campaign was launched against a number of small enemy fortresses in northern Maine and Sonnois. Saint-Aignan, whose garrison included a large Scottish contingent, was captured; La Guierche was also taken but lost to the enemy soon afterwards.⁽¹⁾ French fears of a more ambitious offensive proved to be unfounded. The amassing of a substantial army by Charles VII caused the return of the expedition to Normandy early in August.⁽²⁾ Dorset's troops were to re-assemble at Le Mans at the end of September to receive their pay but the campaign itself was over; Edmund was at his castle of Harcourt in eastern Normandy for the rest of the year.⁽³⁾

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- (1) The location of these towns has posed a number of problems. According to an English account (Chronicles of London, ed. C. Kingsford, 145) the castles captured were Saint-Aignan-sur-Roë and nearby La Guerche on the Breton marches (this version was accepted by B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 168). However the brief description in Les Chroniques du Roi Charles VII par Gilles le Bouvier dit le Hérault Berry, 197-8, gives 'la Guierche en Mayne', identified in Beaucourt, Charles VII, III, 16, as the town of La Guierche on the Sarthe several miles north of Le Mans. This location is verified by the reports of the campaign despatched from the captain of the French-held garrison of Château-du-Loir, to the town of Tours, where the fortresses of both La Guierche and Saint-Aignan were described as 'pres le mans' (Archives Communales de Tours, CC 27, f.53). The course of the expedition is given in Map 8. It is not clear when La Guierche was lost to the French. It was still in English possession when a document listing castles held in Normandy and Maine was drawn up for the peace conference of 1439 (Allmand, 'Anglo-French negotiations of 1439', Camden Miscellany, XXIV, 130). Roger Lord Camoys, one of Edmund's principal captains, had been left in command and was captured by the French (Calendar of French Rolls, 323; Chronicles of London, 145).
- (2) Berry, 197-8. On 7 July, with the English 'de present tenoient le siege devant la forteresse de la guierche pres le mans', ordnance was hastily despatched to Château-du-Loir (Archives Communales de Tours, BB 16, f.187^v). Fears of an assault on one of the bridging points of the Loire caused a stream of hasty defensive measures at Tours, where culverins and other guns were emplaced around the town walls. However the threat never materialised and on 8 August a message was sent to Charles VII at Bourges 'touchant le Retour et esloignement des anglois' (ibid., CC 27, ff.53-56^v).
- (3) Dorset was giving instructions for the re-assembly of his soldiers (at present in western Normandy) at Le Mans, on 31 September (BL, Add.Ch. 1183).

The administration in Normandy were not happy with the way in which the new army had been used. This was mentioned in a list of complaints drawn up by Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, against the policies of Cardinal Beaufort in 1440.⁽¹⁾ In a criticism of the misuse of the expedition led by the cardinal's nephew, Gloucester referred to a letter of complaint that had been sent to the king by the Norman council.⁽²⁾ The details of the council's declaration do not survive. It had been an unfortunate year for the Norman administration; plague and famine had ravaged the countryside, further hindering any effective military action. As to Dorset's expedition itself, it was clearly felt that the army had been wrongly diverted from the purpose of reinforcing the Norman war effort. Edmund Beaufort's new command evidently had given him considerable latitude in the use of the army, and the result was that Maine, rather than Normandy, had been giving military priority.

Perhaps as a result of the campaign an important arrangement was negotiated at the end of 1438 between Edmund, in his capacity of captain general and governor of Anjou and Maine, and the rival French claimants to the territories, Jean duke of Alençon and Charles of Anjou.⁽³⁾ It consisted of ordinances aimed at countering the depopulation of much of the countryside and an attempt to regulate the levying of the appatis by both sides. The text of the new agreement was to be published in all towns along the frontier. Those appointements endorsed by both parties were sealed at Dorset's castle of Harcourt on 2 January 1439.

(1) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 449-50: 'And what gode ye, my right doubted lord, lost by that armee, that was last sent thider by the erle of Dorset, youre counsaile of Fraunce have wele and clerely declared afore youre highnesse herbefore'.

(2) There was not a great deal of military activity in Normandy during the summer and autumn of 1438, the only significant operations being in the Pays de Caux (E. Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 279, n.4).

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, ff.90-90^v.

The items commenced with the declaration 'afin de repopuler et remparer plusieurs paroisses desdis pays a present inhabitees'. Such a state of affairs, certainly on the English side, weakened their military hold on the countryside and drastically reduced the revenues they received. While this important initiative almost certainly came from Dorset himself, he was content to leave the practical details of these negotiations to two experienced members of his council at Le Mans, Richard Guethin (a former captain of the town) and Thomas Gower (the bailli). As a result of the discussions a body of provisions for all parishes along the frontier region was drawn up. An amnesty was to be declared to allow people to return to their villages and renew their respective oaths of allegiance. Those who returned were to be exempted from the levying of any appatis or taille until 1 July 1439.⁽¹⁾ Both sides were to levy appatis of equal amounts, payable each quarter (12 salus a year). Infraction of the ordinances was to be punished by the levying of fines (amendes). Conservateurs of this agreement were to be named by each side (for Dorset Gower, Guethin and Thomas le Clerc) to discuss any disputes over the appatis. Such provisions were to be arranged by the councils of each side at Le Mans and Sablé.⁽²⁾ Parishes near several castles need only pay appatis to one fortress. The goods and possessions of the clergy were to be respected, and compensation was to be paid for any beasts of goods taken by troops in these parishes. If a parish defaulted on one payment the amount of the fine was to be limited to 20 sols tournois.

(1) The proceeds from the appatis and from the taille accounted for the majority of the province's revenue (some 51,000 livres tournois in 1433-4): Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 549-50.

(2) The details of one such conference, discussing the levying of the appatis in certain 'debatable' parishes on the border, survive in ADS, H305, Osbert Mundeford representing Edmund, styled 'count of Maine'.

These arrangements offered some respite to the English administration in Maine, whose military position was becoming increasingly precarious. Evidence suggests however that the success of these ordinances was very limited, and that many of the abuses they were designed to counter remained unchecked.⁽¹⁾ Even so, the agreement represented a useful initiative from the new governor. Although Dorset left the responsibility for the administration of Maine in the hands of his council, he kept in regular contact with his officers.⁽²⁾

The main military priority of 1439 was to be Gascony. In May the earl of Huntingdon indented to serve there with an army of 300 men-at-arms and 2,000 archers; Normandy could expect to receive only relatively small reinforcements.⁽³⁾ In the meantime, with the old earl of Warwick now seriously ill, Dorset and Talbot took over the main body of military responsibility. On 23 April it was Edmund who organised a crue, a reinforcement of the garrison, for the defence and safeguarding of

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- (1) Despite this new arrangement it seems that the ravages of war and depopulation of parishes in Maine continued. In an enquiry held at an assise at Alençon concerning war damage in the parish of H  loup, it was revealed that since the ordinances, appatis had been regularly paid to the garrison of Alençon up to the truce (1444). Despite this, raids from enemy troops at Saint-C  neri, La Guerche, Beaumont-sur-Sarthe, Saint-Aignan, Sill   and La Fert  -Bernard had continued unabated and the parish was depopulated (ADO, A416). These findings also indicated the difficult military position of the English in Maine. Saint-C  neri had been demolished by Bedford in 1433 but had been repaired and occupied by the enemy. The fortress lay on the river Sarthe between Fresnay and Alençon. Beaumont-sur-Sarthe was lost to the French in 1440. It lay astride the main road from Alençon to Le Mans. By 1440 the position of Le Mans, the capital of the comt  , was dangerously isolated.
- (2) Letters from Dorset to the bailli of Le Mans (May 1439), the captains of Le Mans and Mayenne (March 1440): BL, Add. Ch. 3880; BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4009.
- (3) J.H. Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 16. The new expedition was to counter the campaign launched by the French in the previous year which had reached Bordeaux itself before shortage of supplies forced its withdrawal (ibid., 8-9).

Rouen.⁽¹⁾ Both were in the city at the time of Warwick's death on 30 April 1439, and a message was despatched from them to the earl's wife at Caen.⁽²⁾ Dorset was to remain in Rouen and was sitting regularly on the council from the beginning of May.⁽³⁾

A temporary solution to the question of the running of the duchy was arranged in orders issued from the English council on 22 May. They consisted of the appointment and terms of commission of a new governing council.⁽⁴⁾ As well as French officials, the chancellor, Louis of Luxembourg, the bishop of Lisieux and the abbots of Fécamp and Mont-St-Michel, places were included for the principal members of the English aristocracy serving in Normandy: Edmund earl of Dorset and Lords Talbot, Fauconberg and Scales. Also appointed was Edmund's older brother John Beaufort, earl of Somerset.

This commission was to mark Somerset's entry into the war effort. He had only been released after a spell of seventeen years captivity in France in the summer of 1438. He had indented in England as captain of the small fortress of Regnéville, in the Cotentin, on 27 April 1439, but does not seem to have crossed over to Normandy until the end of May.⁽⁵⁾

(1) For Dorset reviewing the retinue of Thomas Griffin see AN, K65/1/20. A force under Lord Grey had also been summoned for service from 9 May (AN, K65/1/22).

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26065/3775.

(3) ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, nos. 142. 144.

(4) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, f.79. The powers of commission are discussed in E.M. Burney, 'The English rule in Normandy, 1435-50' (Oxford BLitt, 1958), 130-1.

(5) BL, Add. Ch. 3878. Somerset's lieutenant, John Sutton, did not take possession for the earl until 27 May: BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.25 .

His arrival, the highest-ranking member of the aristocracy in Normandy, led to some foreign observers believing that he was the new lieutenant-general.⁽¹⁾ He held no powers, however, beyond those of being on the new governing council.

The most important member of the council was the experienced administrator, the archbishop of Rouen, Louis of Luxembourg. As chancellor, no decision could be taken without his being in attendance.⁽²⁾ The presence of at least three other councillors was necessary before a meeting could be summoned. The commission for the governing council was not surprising. A similar situation had existed after the death of the Regent Bedford in September 1435, when the Norman council had run the duchy until the arrival of his successor Richard duke of York. As such it represented a temporary measure. Significantly the council was given no powers to grant lands from the royal demesne; such authority was to rest only with the king's own representative. Since Henry and the English council were in the midst of despatching a major embassy to Calais, an important peace initiative, it was clearly politic to delay provisions for a new governor of the duchy until the diplomatic situation had been clarified.⁽³⁾ The cardinal was the most influential member of this delegation, and it was

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- (1) 'le conte Sombreset, qui lors avoit la charge de par yceluy roy d'Angleterre de la garde et gouvernement de la duchee de Normandie...' (from a description of the siege of Meaux, July 1439): Monstrelet, V, 389. Gruel in his account of the siege also describes Somerset as '... lieutenant du Roy d'Angleterre ...': Guillaume Gruel, Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont, connétable de France, duc de Bretagne (1393-1458), ed. A. Le Vavasseur (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1890), 151. Similarly Berry, 208, referring to the year 1439: 'Et fut gouverneur de Normandie pour les Englois le conte de Sombricet'. However Somerset only had some form of governing commission from his return to France in January 1440.
- (2) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, f.79. The importance of Luxembourg in the Norman administration from 1439-40 is discussed in Allmand, thesis cit, 169-70.
- (3) Allmand, 'Anglo-French negotiations, 1439', BIHR, XL (1967), 8. By 22 May a delegation from Rouen was already in London. The English embassy to Calais was formally appointed the next day, with special powers being granted to the cardinal on 25 May (ibid., 8-9).

natural enough that a prominent role in the administration of Normandy was found for his two nephews.

The commission reflected a new measure of responsibility for Edmund Beaufort in Normandy. His seniority in rank made him one of the principal military commanders, and ensured him a place as one of the chief councillors. He was paid a higher pension (1,200 livres tournois a quarter), and was often specified by name in instructions to and from the council.⁽¹⁾ This regular place in the government of Normandy was to signal a long stay in the duchy. His wife had joined him in Rouen by June 1439, and his household became based in the city.⁽²⁾ He and his brother took on an important share of the military administration. The council had the task of overseeing and supervising the Norman garrisons, and keeping regular contact with the towns. Messengers were constantly being despatched, warning of the danger of treason, reporting the activities of brigands and many other matters. Sometimes captains were summoned to Rouen to be instructed personally by members of the council.⁽³⁾ The seniority of the Beaufort brothers guaranteed them a prominent role in the duchy's affairs.⁽⁴⁾ However, in matters of military strategy there was no substitute for the skill and experience of John Lord Talbot. Talbot was to be the guiding influence behind all counsel and planning for important military operations.

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- (1) BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.24. The usual salary was 1,000 livres tournois a year, but the principal councillors were always paid far more. Instructions to John Salvain, bailli of Rouen, concerning a prisoner held on a charge of lèse majesté (24 May 1439) were from Dorset and the other members of the council (ADSM, G1893).
- (2) ADSM, G40, f.72. For references to the minstrels of Dorset and Talbot in January 1440 see ADSM, G41, f.152.
- (3) Rowe, 'The Grand Conseil', 224-34. For Dorset and Fauconberg interviewing the captain of Le Neubourg in February 1440, see BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3952.
- (4) When Henry VI wrote to the council (17 May 1440) it was Luxembourg, Somerset and Dorset who he mentioned by name (ADSM, G2129).

The decisions in England over the nomination of the council introduced John earl of Somerset to the administration of the duchy. Once he had reached Normandy, John took over a number of important captaincies, Cherbourg, from his uncle the cardinal, and Avranches, Tombelaine and Regnéville from Suffolk.⁽¹⁾ These, the most important fortresses on the western side of the Cotentin, represented a special area of military responsibility, no doubt decided on in council before Somerset left for France. Cherbourg, one of the major ports in Normandy, was handed over to John on 15 July.⁽²⁾ He had taken possession of the others earlier: Regnéville, on the estuary of the Sienne, guarding the approaches to Coutances, was occupied by his lieutenant on 27 May, Avranches and Tombelaine by 1 June.⁽³⁾ The latter two were usually held together; both had large retinues, the garrison of Avranches being at full strength the largest in Normandy.⁽⁴⁾ The nearby fortress of Tombelaine had been constructed on a rock a couple of miles north of Mont-St-Michel to keep a watch on the French garrison there.⁽⁵⁾ These captaincies were to occupy much of Somerset's attention over the next two years. Although actual garrison duties were

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- (1) He was styled captain of Avranches, Tombelaine and Cherbourg in a quittance dated 6 June 1439: BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre) no.25. In this particular document he also held the captaincy of Sainte-Suzanne, an important English garrison in Maine. This was granted to him by his brother Dorset, who as captain-general and governor in Maine was responsible for all military appointments. Sainte-Suzanne was a key stronghold in northern Maine; it was however lost to the French in November 1439 and never recovered (Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 18). For the location of these captaincies see Map 3.
- (2) BN, Clairambault 186 (Norbury)/7.
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1406.
- (4) With thirty mounted lances, fifteen foot lances and 135 archers (BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1406, 1432).
- (5) R. Cintré, Les Marches de Bretagne au Quinzième Siècle (Paris, 1973),80.

delegated to lieutenants,⁽¹⁾ there were more general problems to be dealt with. The surrounding area suffered badly from the activities of the French at Mont-Saint-Michel and the incursions of enemy raiding troops. These were usually the duke of Alençon's men, based in his fortresses along the Breton marches, Laval, Pouancé, La Gravelle and La Guerche.⁽²⁾ These were not regular troops, rather disorderly companies who pillaged both Normandy and Brittany, the garrison of La Guerche having the worst reputation in this respect.⁽³⁾ Along with the problem of dealing with these raiders, there were other difficulties. Perhaps because of its size, the garrison of Avranches suffered from serious arrears of wages. At the time of Somerset's arrival this problem was already acute.⁽⁴⁾ The disruption caused by an invading French army in the winter of 1439 left both Avranches and Regnéville dangerously short of money and provisions.⁽⁵⁾

When Somerset had reached Normandy he was granted a yearly pension of 5,000 livres tournois (from 1 June) for the wages of his own personal mounted retinue, twenty lances and sixty archers.⁽⁶⁾ His brother had been

(1) Somerset retained John Lampet at Avranches and Makyn Longworth at Tombelaine; they had both served as lieutenants of these fortresses under Suffolk: BN, Collection Clairambault 171 (Lampet)/5; 186 (Longworth)/49,50. He appointed Thomas Gower his lieutenant at Cherbourg on 22 September 1439 in place of the cardinal's deputy Henry Norbury: BN, Pièces Originales 1383 (Gower)/9; Collection Clairambault 186 (Norbury)/7.

(2) R. Cintré, Les Marches de Bretagne, 81-94.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Wages amounting to nearly 9,000 livres tournois were still owed for the nine months from December 1437 - September 1438 (Burney, thesis cit., 203).

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4063.

(6) BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.22.

commissioned with an equal force from the end of April.⁽¹⁾ The personal retinue of an important member of the aristocracy was almost always mounted; as well as being a mark of estate it could be used for services in the field. Both brothers also received pensions to cover their expenses as royal councillors.⁽²⁾

Somerset remained in the vicinity of Avranches during June and July, where he and Lord Scales (the captain of Granville) were dealing with a sudden build-up of French soldiers in the area.⁽³⁾ Meanwhile more serious news had reached the Grand Conseil at Rouen: Richemont and a large French army had arrived outside the town of Meaux, one of the last important English garrisons to the east of Paris, and commenced a siege.

By 1439 the English presence in the region of Paris was limited to three important strongholds, Pontoise, Creil and Meaux. The French attack was commanded by Richemont; some fifty companies had assembled under him at a strength of 1,502 men-at-arms and 3,295 archers. The town itself was strongly fortified; on the right bank of the Marne, it was linked by a bridge to the Marché, a well-defended suburb protected by a bend in the river. This new French offensive commenced on 20 July. Seven

(1) Ibid., no.23.

(2) A quittance of Edmund Beaufort's survives 'pour aider et a nous aucunement desfraier des despens que avons fais a l'occasion de service de monsieur le roy pour estre et assister a ses conseaulx pour l'expedicion de ses besoignes et affaires...' (ibid., no.24).

(3) A letter from Talbot (at Rouen) was sent to Somerset engaged in military operations in the area of Avranches on 8 July 1439 (BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 21289/150). An assiette was levied on the vicomté on the orders of Somerset on 22 July: S. Luce, Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel (Paris, 1883, 2 vols.), II (Pièces Diverses), 117-18. The French around Granville are mentioned in BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3829.

bastilles were erected around the town and cannon were put in emplacement.⁽¹⁾

This aggressive move caught the English by surprise. The siege was of great concern to the embassy at Calais, for one of the proposals of the English side had been to surrender Meaux, Creil and St. Germain-en-Laye in return for Harfleur, Dieppe and Mont-Saint-Michel.⁽²⁾ A stream of anxious communications were despatched from the Norman council to the delegation, and from Calais to Henry VI in England.⁽³⁾ It was obvious that a relief force had to be prepared with all speed, a contingency made more difficult by the distance involved and also because fresh reinforcements from England had not yet arrived in the duchy. Urgent orders were sent to Somerset at Avranches: he had to try and raise reinforcements for the town as fast as possible.⁽⁴⁾ A scratch force of men from his own retinue, from the garrison at Avranches, troops 'vivans sur le pays', and even the local populace was hastily assembled at the beginning of August. There was not time to take many of the musters.⁽⁵⁾ Joining with a contingent under Sir Richard Harrington, bailli of Caen at Argentan on 2 August, this small army picked up carts and other ordnance when it had reached Pont-Audemer, before crossing the Seine.⁽⁶⁾

(1) P. Contamine, Guerre, État et Société à la fin du Moyen Âge (Paris, 1972), 263-5; E. Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 292-3.

(2) PPC, V, 362.

(3) Ibid., 384-7.

(4) Messages from the Grand Conseil to Somerset in Basse Normandie concerning the relief of Meaux were despatched late July and early August (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.147).

(5) For this makeshift force '... il assemblast toutes gens de guerre tant de sa retenue que d'autres avecques les nobles de son bailliage...' (BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3832; 26067/4055).

(6) Somerset had picked up supplies of oats at Lisieux on 7 August (Archives Communales de Lisieux, CC 1, Register 17). His force reached Pont-Audemer a few days later (BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3838). The route of his relief force is given in Map 4.

Somerset's march was intended to effect a junction with the small army on its way from England. Retinues under Sir Richard Woodville, Sir William Peyto and Sir William Chamberlain, at a strength of some 900 men, had set sail for Honfleur towards the end of July.⁽¹⁾ The arrival of these troops was of considerable importance, and the Norman council at Rouen anxiously awaited news of their whereabouts.⁽²⁾

Meanwhile, on the orders of Somerset, Dorset and Talbot, a large army had been assembling at Pontoise, drawn from garrisons all over Normandy.⁽³⁾ Talbot and Fauconberg were the commanders of this second force. Its numbers were supplemented by recruiting large numbers of soldiers 'vivans sur le pays'. These troops, which were mustered on 9 August, were given pay for fifteen days only, an indication that the English over had the resources to undertake a brief operation outside Normandy.⁽⁴⁾ Artillery was also collected.⁽⁵⁾ According to the chronicler Gruel, who had first-hand knowledge of the siege, being there in the service of Richemont, it was a formidable English army which finally arrived, with Somerset, Dorset, Talbot, Scales and Woodville as principal captains.⁽⁶⁾

(1) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 458.

(2) At the end of July a poursuivant was sent to Basse Normandie from the council at Rouen 'pour soy enquerir et savoir de l'armee nouvellement venue d'angleterre et le port elle descendroit a fin d'icelle haster pour est en secours de ville et marche de Meaux'. At the beginning of August a messenger brought the chancellor, Louis of Luxembourg, the news 'de la descente de l'armee d'Angleterre deca la mer' (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.147; G40, f.72^v).

(3) AN, K65/1/30, 33.

(4) BN, Add. Ch. 12031.

(5) BN, Pièces Originales 2787 (Talbot)/35.

(6) Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont, 151. Gruel however gives an impossibly high figure for the strength of the English force, 7,000 or more. The numbers given by Monstrelet, V, 389, (4,000) seem more realistic. Longchamps poursuivant, sent from the chancellor at Rouen to Calais, reported the principal captains as Talbot, Somerset, Dorset, Fauconberg, Woodville and Chamberlain (PPC, V, 386). Woodville was later paid 500 livres tournois for his services at Meaux: BN, Pièces Originales 3050 (Wydeville), no.22. Berry, 201, singles out only Talbot, Fauconberg and Scales as chief captains. On 13 August the archbishop's sermon exhorted the people of Rouen 'a prier pour messeigneurs et leur compagnie qui estoient albiert pour le secours de Meaux' (ADSM, G 40).

Hearing through his spies of the movements of the relief army, Richemont launched an assault and carried the town on 12 August, before the English could arrive, the garrison retreating to the Marché on the left-bank.⁽¹⁾ After a few days of skirmishing, two of the bastilles were recaptured but an attempt to draw the French into battle was unsuccessful and shortage of provisions compelled the army to retreat, after they had reinforced the English garrison holding out in the Marché. The command was left to Sir William Chamberlain. Chamberlain, an experienced soldier, was not a surprising choice; indeed he had been appointed governor of Meaux and Creil some years earlier in September 1436.⁽²⁾ After the relief army had returned to Normandy, the siege was recommenced. Charles VII despatched further reinforcements to Richemont. The bastilles were rebuilt and the island between the Marché and the town occupied again. Fully surrounded, Chamberlain agreed to surrender if no help had arrived by 15 September.⁽³⁾ Somerset had left for England at the end of August and it was his brother who sent news from Rouen to the cardinal and the English party at Calais, that the English captain had entered into an agreement with Richemont to surrender his force.⁽⁴⁾ Chamberlain's decision caused consternation among the English camp and was widely regarded as premature, even treasonable. Talbot and Fauconberg hastily organised a second relief column at Rouen, but they did not reach Pontoise

(1) Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 293; Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 17.

(2) BL, Add. Ch. 129.

(3) Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 295.

(4) A messenger from the earl of Dorset at Rouen had arrived at Calais on 5 September reporting the agreement of Chamberlain to surrender the Marché to Richemont if help was not forthcoming (PPC, V, 387).

until 16 September, a day after Chamberlain's surrender.⁽¹⁾ The capture of the town represented a considerable success for Richemont, who, well aware of the difficulties faced by the English in victualling their relief army, had wisely avoided any engagement.

Somerset's return to England signalled the need for further reinforcements for the Norman war effort. On his arrival a new indenture was sealed between him and the king for the captaincy of Falaise.⁽²⁾ Custody of this important fortress had been handed over from Talbot to Somerset's lieutenant by 4 September.⁽³⁾ This new appointment signified an important mark of royal patronage. It was for a term of life, and awarded Somerset the revenues of the *castellerie*, the guets. The guet was the levy made upon the villagers in each castellancy, either of personal service of watch and ward, or a commutation of such obligations for money payments. Fines were also imposed for any default. The revenue, which was usually collected by the local vicomte, was sometimes assigned to a captain to cover payment of wages. As a mark of special favour certain captains would receive the right to the income themselves. This was a privilege also enjoyed by Dorset for his captaincy of Alençon, though in this case Somerset had been appointed captain of Falaise for life. Thus he had been awarded a regular source of income, rather like a pension.⁽⁴⁾ This was a position enjoyed by Mathew Gough, after 1440,

(1) Pollard, thesis cit., 171-2. Throughout the operation Talbot had taken principal responsibility for the assembling of the relief force.

(2) A copy of the original indenture does not survive but it was referred to in extensive revisions to Somerset's commission made in a meeting of the Norman council after his return to France (27 January 1440): BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3935.

(3) AN, K65/1/43.

(4) R.A. Newhall, 'Bedford's ordinance of the watch of September 1428', EHR, L (1935), 47-9; R. Doucet, 'Les finances anglaises en France à la fin de la guerre de cent ans', Le Moyen Age, XXXVI (1926), 286.

as life captain of Bayeux, and other long-serving captains who had been rewarded for loyal service.⁽¹⁾ For Somerset this represented an important source of income, as the guet from Falaise was the highest of all the Norman garrisons, in 1428-9 being 1,213 livres tournois.⁽²⁾ This revenue was collected regularly until his death in 1444, being received from the vicomte of Falaise either by his lieutenant or one of his stewards.⁽³⁾ The grant was the first of a number of rewards he was to receive from the king prior to taking a new army over to Normandy in January 1440.

In November 1439 the Norman council received a petition from Somerset concerning affairs of a more technical nature, the non-payment of wages for his garrison at Cherbourg.⁽⁴⁾ Although Somerset's lieutenant, Thomas Gower, had taken possession for him on 15 July, for some reason the taking of musters had been delayed until 2 September.⁽⁵⁾ Without the muster rolls the treasury could not authorise payment; it was thus necessary to get a warrant from council for the wages of the intervening one and a half months. Somerset, in London for the opening of parliament on 12 November, was already preparing a new army for the duchy.⁽⁶⁾ Military operations in Normandy were to continue under the aegis of Dorset and Talbot.

(1) Newhall, loc.cit., 47-9.

(2) A number of quittances survive concerning Somerset's receipt of this sum: 808 livres tournois was collected on 1 November 1440: BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.32; 100 livres tournois on 28 March 1441, ibid., no.34; 300 livres tournois in May 1442: BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 7628, 535. For the 1428-9 figures and comparisons with receipts from other garrisons, see Newhall, loc.cit., 47-9.

(3) It was most frequently collected by his receiver-general Thomas Sutton (BN, Pièces Originales 65, no.34) or Richard Harrington, his lieutenant, acting as receiver: BN, Clairambault 168 (Harrington)/55.

(4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3897.

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1430.

(6) Recruitment for the expedition had commenced in November 1439 (Calendar of French Rolls, 330-31).

On 1 October 1439 Dorset had taken over the captaincy of Rouen.⁽¹⁾ This important post was usually held by those of highest military authority in Normandy; previous governors had included Bedford, York and Warwick. The captain's responsibilities, in addition to the regular garrison (which included a detachment of twenty archers for each of the four gates of the city), involved the recruitment of crues, extra forces which were drafted for defence of the castle of Rouen (on the north side of the city, built by Philip Augustus), the palace (begun by Henry V on the Seine, at the lower end of the town) and the bridge (the barbican on the left bank of the Seine).⁽²⁾

During September and early October Dorset was preparing a new offensive against the town of Damville, on the Iton south of Evreux, which had been recaptured by the French.⁽³⁾ By 5 October he had left Rouen and was at Evreux, where orders were hastily despatched to Talbot and Thomas Gerard (captain of Gisors) commanding them to send all the men-at-arms and archers they could for the re-taking of Damville 'where it was said the enemy were in great force'.⁽⁴⁾ Before anything further could be undertaken much more serious news was to arrive.

(1) A quittance for the payment of Richard Thornes, lieutenant of the castle of Rouen under Dorset, gave 1 October 1439 as the date when Edmund took over the captaincy: BN, Pièces Originales 2835 (Thornes)/4.

(2) P. Le Cacheux, Rouen au temps de Jeanne d'Arc et pendant l'occupation anglaise (1419-1449) (Rouen, 1931), xlviii.

(3) A messenger was sent from Rouen on the orders of Dorset to Caudebec (captain Fulkes Eyton) concerning the recovery of Damville on 1 September 1439 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3877). Another (1 October) from Dorset to Thomas Hoo at Mantes, concerned the despatch of troops to Evreux to join the earl for 'la recouvrement de la place de damville': BN, Pièces Originales 1530 (Hoo)/6. For the recovery of Damville by the French in 1437 see AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 5, f.15.

(4) BL, Add. Ch. 447.

A French army had been gathering in Anjou and Maine, and under the command of the Constable Richemont had invaded western Normandy.⁽¹⁾ A warning of this from the Norman council seems to have reached Edmund at Evreux by 17 October, for a messenger was hastily sent by the earl to John Lampet, the lieutenant at Avranches.⁽²⁾ It soon emerged that this French threat was extremely serious, and that a regular siege of Avranches was about to be commenced.⁽³⁾ Dorset was forced to abandon his plans to move against Damville, and, sending word of this change of plan to the citizens of Evreux, he returned to Rouen in November to recruit a stronger army to meet this new threat.⁽⁴⁾ He and Talbot busily assembled a force from garrison troops and those soldiers 'vivans sur le pays'.⁽⁵⁾

By early December preparations were almost complete. Retinues had arrived from Gournay, Pont-de-l'Arche and Fresnay in Maine, with additional contingents under Fulkes Eyton, captain of Caudebec and Richard Harrington, bailli of Caen.⁽⁶⁾ The troops were billeted^{south-} east of Rouen in the towns of Pont-de-l'Arche, Pont-Saint-Pierre, Neuville and Franqueville and in the surrounding countryside. Orders were given that all these soldiers were

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- (1) This new offensive was planned by Charles VII and Richemont after the capture of Meaux in September 1439. Troops of the duke of Alençon and Marshal Lohéac had gathered at Angers and Château-Gontier: Chronique de Charles VII, roi de France, par Jean Chartier, ed. V. de Viriville (Paris, 1858, 3 vols.) I, 250-1.
- (2) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 21289/152.
- (3) The siege began towards the end of November (Chartier, I, 251).
- (4) A messenger was despatched carrying letters of Dorset to the bailli, burgesses and inhabitants of Evreux (30 November 1439): BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 21289/153.
- (5) For Dorset, Ogard and Harrington recruiting troops, see BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3894. A muster of the garrison of Falaise (22 December 1439) noted that eight lances and twenty-four archers (all mounted) were absent on war service on the marches of the Cotentin (BN, Clairambault 200/87).
- (6) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.347. All the principal retinues of this army and their wages are listed here.

to be brought before Dorset and Talbot at Rouen on 8 December.⁽¹⁾ Dorset was in supreme command of the new army, and was responsible for the provision of military equipment and the payment of all the retinues. Light artillery (carts of ribauldequins , small mobile field guns) and other ordnance was assembled and the army left Rouen.⁽²⁾

Marching towards the Cotentin the force had reached St. Lô on 18 December, where a quantity of cannonballs and other equipment was collected.⁽³⁾ The army had been joined at some stage by Lords Fauconberg and Scales and now consisted of all the principal captains in Normandy.⁽⁴⁾ The approaches to Avranches were guarded by a small river, the Sée, and it was here that the French had gathered to prevent the English crossing.⁽⁵⁾ The English army encamped at Pont Gilbert on the other side of the river, and it was here that a pursuivant from Rouen arrived, and witnessed the raising of the siege:

'... auquel lieu du Pont Gilbert le dit poursuyvant arriva le mardi de devant le jour de Noel derrain passe xxij jour de ce present moys de decembre, et lendemain ensuivant du dit mardi fut leve le siege desdis ennemis qui senfuirent honteusement a leur grant deshonneur et confusion...'.⁽⁶⁾

The English force, finding their passage blocked, had found a crossing on the sand spits further down the river where the Sée joined the

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3910.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 1202 (Forsted)/6.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3920.

(4) Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 300 (though Cosneau wrongly refers to Warwick and Somerset directing the operation).

(5) Ibid; Berry, 209-10. For the location of the opposing armies see Map 5.

(6) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3920. Transcripts of a number of these quittances are to be found in S. Luce, Chronique du Mont-St-Michel, II, 121-4.

Sélune. This bold move allowed a surprise attack on the enemy position. Faced with a turning of their flank, the majority of the French troops had fled, and the rest were routed in their camp after which the English freely made their way into Avranches.⁽¹⁾ Unfortunately for Dorset, the victory was marred by the fact that a party of French had fallen on his baggage train, carrying off his chaplain and treasury, containing all the wages for his own retinue.⁽²⁾ The effective action of the English had averted a major military crisis, and the welcome news of the relief was rapidly carried all over Normandy.⁽³⁾ Richemont's forces had proved poorly disciplined; nevertheless the rout of his men was without doubt due to the vigorous action of Dorset and Talbot, who had responded well to the danger.⁽⁴⁾

After the failure of the peace negotiations at Calais, it was necessary to appoint a new governor of France and Normandy as soon as possible. However while the Norman council was running the duchy on a temporary basis, the king and English council had yet to decide on a successor to the post formerly held by the earl of Warwick. From the partial survival of a transcript concerning the commission, it appeared that the office had originally been offered to Humphrey duke of Gloucester. However:

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- (1) Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 300-1. According to Gruel, 155-7, Richemont lacked the proper artillery and manouvriers, was short of money and his troops were poorly disciplined.
 - (2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.347. The Grand Conseil directed the Norman treasury to rebate Dorset for the lost wages (19 January 1440).
 - (3) The news of this lifting of the siege of Avranches was brought to Evreux on 27 December 1439. The captains of Gisors and Gournay were informed of 'la joyeuse recouvrance de la ville d'Avranches' on 2 January 1440 (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 6, no.3; Carton 11, no.152). Dorset's own pursuivant, 'Cadron', carried the news to England (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.154).
 - (4) The relief of Avranches was included in a list of the most notable English victories in France in The Boke of Noblesse, ed. J. Nichols (Roxburghe Club, 1860), 28.

'... mais pour ce qui si hastivement ne peut estre priet pour y aller a telle puissance et appareil, comme a son estat pour le honneur de nous de lui et utilite diceux nos Royaume et Duchie appartient. Et besoin est et necessite de pouvoir Premierement de personne de grand estat et vaillance de notre sang et lineage pour le Gouvernement et la conduite de la guerre sous nous. Et en iceux nos Royaume et Duchie, en attendant l'aller pardeca de nostredit oncle, Savoir faisons que nous confians a plein de grands sens loyaulte et diligence et bonne vaillance de notre trescher et tresame cousin Jean de Beaufort, Comte de Sommerset, Icellui par grand avis et meure deliberation de notre Conseil avons fait, ordonne, institue et etabli par les presentes notre Lieutenant et Gouverneur General sur le fait de la guerre par tous notredit Royaume et Duchie de Normandie, auquel jusque a notre bon plaisir avons donne...'. (1)

The terms of this appointment are unfortunately not complete. The copy comes to an end at the foot of a page, and no date survives for when this decision was made. The first reference to Somerset as 'lieutenant general et gouverneur sur le fait de la guerre' occurs on 18 January 1440, at which time he had just returned to France.⁽²⁾ His appointment must have been made some time earlier, the most likely date being around 13 December 1439, the time of his indenture with the king for six months' war-service with a new army of 100 lances and 2,000 archers.⁽³⁾

Since John Beaufort had undertaken to lead a new expedition for the new campaigning season in France, it was clearly necessary to delegate some sort of authority to him. The holding of a more limited commission

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- (1) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, ff.81-81^v. There is a later transcript of the same copy in BN, Collection Brienne (now classified under Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 23530, ff.87-95).
- (2) Letters of John earl of Somerset, 'lieutenant general sur le fait de la guerre', given at Caen on 18 January 1440, made a small grant of confiscated lands (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.435).
- (3) PRO, E404/56/155. Somerset's new governing commission was referred to in The Brut in one of the entries for 1439-40: 'And in this same yere, aboute Cristmasse, went the Erle of Somersett ouer the see into Fraunce and Normandy, with a roiall peple of lordes, knyghtes, Squyers, men of armes and archers, forto gouerne there the Kynges peple and landes, and to strenght the lordes and theire peple that hadde been there long tyme, savyng and mayntenynge the Kynges right and title' (The Brut, 475).

as king's lieutenant certainly was not an innovation, but the precise nature of the discretion allowed to him had to be clearly defined for the administration in Normandy. In terms of military policy, for commanding an army in the field, Somerset received much the same powers as a full lieutenant-general. He was given authority in all matters of discipline and punishment concerning his troops, and for the requisitioning of all necessary supplies and horses. He had power to demolish fortresses that could no longer be properly defended, or to repair those that could, and to summon masons, carpenters and other workers from the vicomtés for the task. He could muster and review all the Norman garrison troops at his discretion and call up captains or any other men that could fight for the purposes of a new campaign. He had authority to treat with rebel towns and fortresses, and to issue pardons and safe-conducts.

However, in matters of long-term military arrangements and civil administration, his powers were more limited. He was allowed to appoint captains and other officers in cities recovered from the enemy until the king or Gloucester otherwise commanded. Similarly he could reappoint existing captains in Normandy (but not to the permanent posts of marshal, seneschal or admiral) subject to confirmation by the king or Norman council. In terms of grants of property he was limited to possessions worth less than 500 livres tournois a year, the gift to be ratified by king or council within three months. This was a third of the value of what both York and Warwick had previously been able to give as full lieutenants-general.⁽¹⁾ Nevertheless it was still an important privilege

(1) Their commissions allowed them to grant land up to an annual value of 1,000 salus d'or (BN, Ms. Fr. 5330, ff.137-137^v).

and allowed Somerset, as was customary, to provide some measure of reward to his own servants and members of his household as well as to his brother's.⁽¹⁾

The commission represented a compromise solution until Gloucester arrived in Normandy, which was expected to be in the summer of 1440. In a letter to Fulkes Eyton, captain of Caudebec, on 14 March, Somerset, after mentioning a slight alteration to the numbers of the garrison required for the quarter from 30 March - 30 June, added that it was hoped that Gloucester himself would have arrived before the end of that period.⁽²⁾ In fact the duke was never to cross over. He had similarly been unable to raise a force in 1434.⁽³⁾ If a shortage of money was the reason it may have prompted his angry outburst over his offers of service in France in his attack on Cardinal Beaufort and his policies.⁽⁴⁾ At the beginning of July the duke of York was appointed to the post, with the power 'as my lord of Gloucester had, or shulde have had now late'.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) The most important grant made by Somerset to a member of his own household was to Thomas Vaughan, 'huisher de sa chambre', of land worth 40 livres tournois a year (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.485). Servants of his brother Dorset were frequent beneficiaries of grants; among the recipients were Adam de Mares (a lawyer in Edmund's service), John Morgan (a 'familier domestique'): ibid., 27, f.1; 26, f.349. An important grant to Dorset himself was made at the siege of Harfleur on 3 September 1440 (lands worth 100 livres tournois a year): ibid., 26, f.475. Similarly Edmund Beaufort made grants of confiscated lands in Maine to his brother's men, including a donation to Henry Barton, Somerset's lieutenant at Regnéville (ADSM, Tabellionage de Rouen, 1439-40, f.187).
- (2) BN, Pièces Originales 1091 (Eyton)/3. Normally the governor would see to the arrangements for the next year's indenture-making (Newhall, Muster and Review, 131).
- (3) For references to his failure to recruit an army of sufficient 'puissance' for his rank, see PPC, IV, 213-16.
- (4) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 440.
- (5) York was appointed lieutenant general on 2 July 1440, for a five-year term (Rymer, X, 786). See also Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 586, 604-5; Burney, thesis cit., 131.

Although Somerset's powers as actual governor were only temporary and restricted, his command was clearly important. The major land grant he received in France in May 1440, the farm of the appanage of St - Sauveur-Lendelin, was to be effective from the previous December (the occasion of his indenture) and may well have been discussed by him and the king before he left for Normandy.⁽¹⁾ Somerset was also to receive a monthly salary of 600 livres tournois for the office of 'lieutenant general sur le fait de la guerre' and to maintain his estate.⁽²⁾ His own personal retinue was increased, on his arrival in France, to thirty mounted lances and 90 archers.⁽³⁾

Throughout December and early January preparations were in motion for Somerset's army, a force of some 2,000 men, which was intended to form the nucleus of a new offensive in Normandy. Shipping and ordnance were assembled, and Somerset and the first contingent of the expedition crossed the Channel early in January. The arrangements for the recruitment and embarkation of the army, which consisted mostly of archers, were hurried. The second body of men did not muster until February. On crossing to Normandy they did not join Somerset's main army but instead lived off the countryside in the Bessin causing considerable

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- (1) In a letter of 29 May 1440 Somerset referred to this grant being effective from the previous December; the Norman chancery had refused to seal it: BN, Pièces Originales 2714 (Somerset)/4. The grant had to be re-issued by the crown.
- (2) BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre)no,29: a quittance of Somerset for his pension of 600 livres tournois received for February 1440, 'A nous ordonnee par monsieur le roy pour nous aider a supporter les fraiz et charges que faire nous convient a l'occasion dudit estat et office de lieutenant general...'.
 (3) They were mustered on 17 February 1440, when Somerset received 893 livres 15 sols tournois (ibid., no.26).

difficulties for the local administration.⁽¹⁾ Somerset landed at Cherbourg and after stopping briefly at Coutances and then Caen, was back in Rouen before the end of the month.⁽²⁾ A meeting of the Norman council, with Somerset present, on 28 January, was probably the occasion of discussing the new campaign which was to be launched on the marches of Picardy.⁽³⁾ It was on the same day that Somerset issued orders from Rouen concerning the soldiers living 'sur le plat pays et non ayans charge ne retenue', who were to assemble before him at the town of Bernay in eastern Normandy by 15 February. His message contained a prohibition of the seizure of horses or donkeys 'a l'occasion desquelles les labourers pourvoient est perturbes de faire leurs laboures'. These instructions were being proclaimed in the area of Touques and Honfleur by 30 January.⁽⁴⁾ Seizure of horses, animals, wagons or grain by soldiers was an old problem; one of Henry V's ordinances forbade any such action unless payment was made promptly and in good money, but this was inevitably abused, especially by unsupervised troops.⁽⁵⁾

These soldiers outside the regular system of garrison retinues were an inevitable consequence of the new expeditions that arrived from England.

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- (1) Musters were to be taken at Poole on 28 December 1439 (CPR, 1436-41, 370). £5,271 was paid out for his first quarter's wages, £5,152 for the second, for a force of three knights, 97 men-at-arms and 1,980 archers: PRO, E403/736 (11 December, 23 February). Evidence indicates that the army was shipped over in instalments. Further musters for Somerset's troops were being taken at Poole in February though Somerset himself had crossed early in January (CPR, 1436-41, 408). The shipping account of John Hexham shows that the majority of ships for the expedition were arrested between late January and early March (PRO, E101/53/25). It seems likely that only a relatively small retinue accompanied Somerset early in the year.
- (2) He had stayed several days at Coutances, where he was received at the bishop's house: ADSM, G1161 (account of the bishop of Coutances, 1439-40; four pots of wine presented to the count of Somerset 'dum venit de Anglia'). He had reached Caen by 18 January (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.435).
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3936.
- (4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3938.
- (5) R.A. Newhall, 'Discipline in an English army of the fifteenth century', Military Historian and Economist, II (1917), 147.

As the indenture expired most were left leaderless and wageless, 'vivans sur le pays'. The problem had been made worse by the loss of fortresses in the Île de France and Pays de Caux. The recruitment of these men into new armies offered some measure of a temporary solution to the problem, and was a procedure that was often adopted by this stage of the war.⁽¹⁾

After stopping briefly in Lisieux Somerset made his way to Bernay in eastern Normandy, where he reviewed many of the companies from Normandy that were to join his own army 'au recouvrement de certaines places occupees par les adversaires du roy notre seigneur et autrement sur les champs ou Reboutement diceulx adversaires'. Forces that were to join him included 300 lances and 900 archers from the Norman garrisons, and 200 lances and 600 archers from the troops without retinues 'vivans sur le pays'.⁽²⁾ This large force was provided with wages for the limited period of fifteen days only, an indication that it had been decided to retain them solely for the chevauchée into Picardy that was to follow.⁽³⁾

The total strength of Somerset's army was 700 lances and 2,000 archers. The 200 lances and 500 archers not paid by the Norman treasury had shipped with the earl from England in January 1440. The remainder of the expedition was not to reach Normandy in time to join the campaign. There

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- (1) A. Curry, 'The first English standing army? - Military organisation in Lancastrian Normandy, 1420-50', in Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England, ed C.D. Ross (1979), 200.
- (2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3988. Bernay had been an important assembly point for troops throughout the English occupation: H. Frondeville, Étude sur la vicomté d'Orbec pendant l'occupation anglaise (Paris, 1936), 34-5.
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3988.

were many complaints about these soldiers from England. After their arrival in western Normandy many of the troops deserted and took to living off the countryside. Desertion was not an easy problem to deal with. If a closer watch was kept on the Norman ports it only further burdened the countryside. Also it was an old trick for men to desert their original captains and then enrol in the companies of the Anglo-Norman captains thereby getting a second advance of wages.⁽¹⁾ But in this case the organisation of the expedition was at fault. Many of Somerset's troops were still in the vicomté of Bayeux several months after their disembarkation.⁽²⁾

Along with Somerset, the principal commander of this new force was Talbot, who had arrived at Bernay with his own personal retinue on 17 February.⁽³⁾ Talbot had led a very successful raid into Picardy in November 1437 and may well have suggested the present plan of campaign.⁽⁴⁾ After reviewing those troops that had reached the mustering-point over the next two days, Somerset wished to wait no longer and moved on to Gournay, closer to the frontier, where further soldiers were recruited.⁽⁵⁾ By this time the ratio of one man-at-arms to three archers in field armies

(1) Newhall, 'Discipline in an English Army', 143.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4026: instructions from Richard Harrington to the vicomte of Bayeux concerning 'gens vivans sur le pays', many from Somerset's army from England, who had not joined the earl (17 April 1440). The vicomte was ordered to muster them and clear them from the countryside as fast as possible. They were to rejoin Somerset's main army.

(3) AN, K65/1/5. Somerset also arrived at Bernay on 17 February after having spent a number of days lodged at the Hôtel Jean du Manoir in nearby Lisieux (Archives Communales de Lisieux, CC 1, Register 17) where a presentation of wine was made to 'le gouverneur de Normandie'.

(4) Pollard, thesis cit., 167.

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3988. Somerset had reviewed troops assembled at Bernay (17, 19-20 February) and at nearby Harcourt (18 February): AN, K65/1/5-10; Henry Huntingdon Library, Ms. 336.

was so standard that it was not usually indicated beyond the number of lances and a phrase such as 'and the archers'. But for a force gathered from the soldiers 'vivans sur le pays', who had assembled at various towns in eastern Normandy (Harcourt, Le Neubourg, Louviers, Pont-de-l'Arche, Les Andelys and Gournay) before joining the main army, it seems it was far easier to find archers than men-at-arms. One of the main contingents of the 'gens de guerre estans sur le pays qui ne sont de garnisons et autres retenues' under the captain Robert Brid consisted of nine mounted lances and 211 archers.⁽¹⁾ Another group recruited by Lord Fauconberg had ten lances and 300 archers, while Griffith Aparok had forty-five archers and no lances at all.⁽²⁾ The chances of raising many properly equipped men-at-arms from these soldiers cannot have been high.

After reviewing more companies at Gournay on 22 February. Somerset and his army marched north towards the frontier with Picardy.⁽³⁾ On the course of the campaign that followed there is an unusually detailed account from the chronicler Monstrelet, which includes prisoners' names and precise amounts paid for ransoms.⁽⁴⁾

Monstrelet described the assembling under Somerset, Talbot and other captains of about 3,000 men along the marches, who along with a charroy, a quantity of cartage for carrying their artillery and supplies, marched

(1) AN, K65/1/7.

(2) BN, Clairambault 185 (Neville)/56; AN, K65/1/10.

(3) Picardy was one of the areas worst affected by raiding troops. The damaging effects of the war are described in A. Huguet, Aspects de la Guerre de Cent Ans en Picardie Maritime 1400-1450 (Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de Picardie, XLVIII, L, 1941, 1944).

(4) Monstrelet, V, 405-9.

towards the Santerre district of Picardy.⁽¹⁾ The arrival of this large army caused a panic in Burgundy, with fears that the English intended to cross the Somme and raid deep into their territory. Troops were hurriedly raised under the count of Étampes to resist the invaders in Santerre and the duchess of Burgundy sent a messenger to Talbot, now at Lihons (24 February) demanding to know his intentions.⁽²⁾ The army was to pass close to the Somme at Moreuil, but then swung southwards and encamped in front of the town of Folleville.⁽³⁾ Artillery was brought up and a bombardment commenced. Much damage was done, and the captain of the castle was killed, on which the others surrendered, paying a large ransom. Somerset then repaired the castle and put stores and a garrison in it.⁽⁴⁾ His army then moved on to the town of Lihons.⁽⁵⁾

Before the arrival of the troops the inhabitants of the town had taken their most valuable goods to the safety of the castle or the large fortified church. Somerset, after commanding those in the church to surrender, launched an assault, but without success. Aware that the church could not be taken without cost in both time and men, he gave

(1) Ibid, 405. This tallies with the numbers given in documents of the Norman treasury, the whole force totalling 700 lances and 2,100 archers (BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3988).

(2) ADN, B1969, ff.167-167^v.

(3) The movements of the army were referred to in a warrant for the payment of Burgundian troops guarding Picardy from 15 February to the end of March 1440, '... pour resister a la venue que le conte de Sombresset et le sire de Talbot accompagnes de grant nombre danglois firent lors ou pays de Santerres' (BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4028). The army's route is given in Map 6.

(4) This is verified by a Burgundian document referring to troops serving in Picardy, '... comme pour faire guerre aux anglois estans en la place de folleville...' (July 1440): BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4057. Traces of the shot fired by the English and the repairs made by Somerset after the garrison had surrendered can still be seen in the castle: P. Limichin, Folleville. Guide pour la visite de l'église et du château (Folleville, 1938), 13.

(5) On the plateau of Santerre, twenty miles east of Amiens.

orders for it to be set alight with all the men, women and children inside it. Seeing the fate of these poor people, those inside the castle surrendered, for which they had to pledge a ransom of 10,000 francs. For security for this sum the English took a number of hostages, who were taken back to Rouen and kept in prison there.⁽¹⁾ Contemporary documents substantiate the account of the devastation of Lihons. In one, a petition for a rebate of the taxes because of war damage, one of the inhabitants complained of the '... destruction par les anglois qui au mois de fevrier dernier passe vindrent a grosse puissance logier en ladite ville et prendre par siege la fortresse dudit Lihons demolir et ardoir leglise, et grant nombre de peuple qui estoient retraits a seurite en Icelle...'. He then mentioned the many prisoners that the English had taken as hostages.⁽²⁾ They were carried back to Rouen, and kept in the prisons of the castle, '... en la grosse tour dicellui en la chambre ou sont les prisonniers qui ont este amenez des parties de Picardie...'.⁽³⁾ The sum for their release was paid up by February 1441.⁽⁴⁾

Attempts to resist this army were hampered by the men of Jean de Luxembourg, who were still on friendly terms with the English, and the army was able to return from Lihons to Folleville, and from there back to Normandy early in March with their plunder and prisoners, without any molestation.⁽⁵⁾ The garrisoning of Folleville was to cause

(1) Monstrelet, V, 406-7.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4161.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/4071.

(4) AN, K66/13: payment by the seigneur de Moreuil and the seigneur de Couterey to Lord Talbot and the English, 2,500 salus d'or for the ransom of the inhabitants of Lihons in Santerre (25 February 1441).

(5) Monstrelet, V, 407-9.

considerable nuisance to the Burgundians. It was the base for numerous small raids into their territory, and was only removed when the soldiers were bought out over a year later, in May 1441.⁽¹⁾

After this raid had been completed, more regular operations were commenced in Normandy. Lord Fauconberg took charge of the siege of Dangu (near Gisors), which had begun by the middle of March.⁽²⁾ Somerset, after returning to Rouen, briefly took over the routine duties of military supervision.⁽³⁾ He left the city early in April with fresh troops, to take charge of operations in the Cotentin. Although Avranches had been successfully relieved the previous December, the area still suffered from the incursions of enemy troops, and there were constant fears of a new attack. One of Somerset's first actions on reaching Avranches was to levy a small assiette on the inhabitants of the vicomté (29 April).⁽⁴⁾ The justification of this fine was to allow a general pardon to those who had joined with the French during the siege of last winter.

The details of this tax, and another which had been imposed on the vicomté on his orders on 22 July 1439, survive from a royal inquiry carried out early in 1446 concerning extraordinary taxes which had been levied by Somerset in Normandy.⁽⁵⁾ Local officials, the vicomte of

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- (1) An aide was levied in Picardy by the duke of Burgundy (16 July 1440) for 'la lutte contre les Anglois estant en la place de Folleville' (Bibliothèque Municipale de Reims, Collection Tarbé, Carton V, no.55). The garrison were paid 2,600 salus to leave the fortress in May 1441 (Archives Communales d'Amiens, BB5, f.78^v).
- (2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4015; ADE, II F 4068. Fauconberg and his retinue had arrived on 13 March 1440.
- (3) ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.155; BL, Add. Ch. 3893.
- (4) AN, K68/19, f.73^v (a transcript is in S. Luce, Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel, II, 125).
- (5) AN, K68/19.

Avranches, the receiver and lawyers had made the collections and delivered the money to the earl. The sums were not large, 300 livres tournois in 1440, assessed from those who had aided the French the previous December, and 1,000 livres tournois in 1439, presumably to pay for the wages of the garrison of Avranches.⁽¹⁾ However they were in a strict sense irregular, being authorised neither by the Norman estates or the council at Rouen, though it was not unusual for local commanders to levy small aides in areas where military operations were to take place.⁽²⁾

By the beginning of May Somerset had left Avranches and had taken a force into northern Maine against the French fortress of La Gravelle. This punitive measure was taken against one of the bases for raiding enemy troops. The castle, held by Alençon's men, was put under siege and bombardes and other artillery were brought up from Avranches.⁽³⁾ The garrison quickly surrendered, whereupon the place was occupied by the English.⁽⁴⁾ After this successful sortie, the earl was back in Avranches by 23 May.⁽⁵⁾ More routine matters were to occupy him for the next few weeks, as he undertook a general tour of inspection. On a visit to his captaincy of Regnéville early in June he heard a petition from the

(1) S. Luce, op.cit., 117-18, 125.

(2) For example, a levy of 300 livres tournois from the inhabitants of Condé-sur-Noireau to be delivered to the earl of Suffolk in 1436 (BL, Add. Ch. 11898).

(3) On the orders of Somerset two large bombardes 'Jacques of Harfleur' and 'la Dauphine', were brought from Avranches to the siege he had begun 'a la place de la gravelle' (5 May 1440): BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4039; Pièces Originales 1374 (Gourdel).

(4) La Gravelle was recaptured by the French in 1442 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 27, f.207).

(5) His appointment of Richard Burhill as captain of Gisors was made at Avranches on 23 May: BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4069.

inhabitants of the neighbouring parishes of Heugeville and Tourville concerning supplies of grain lent to the late Henry Barton, then his lieutenant there, during the siege of Avranches.⁽¹⁾

During all this military activity Dorset had remained at Rouen. On various occasions he raised additional troops for guard duties in the city.⁽²⁾ As well as appointing a general lieutenant under his own authority, John Hanford, lieutenants were also appointed, as was customary, for the guard of the castle (Richard Thornes), the bridge (Bertrand Montferrand), and the palace (Thomas Gerard).⁽³⁾ Dorset's own personal retinue also remained based here.⁽⁴⁾

Both Gerard and Thornes, professional soldiers, developed close connections with the Beauforts. Thomas Gerard, who left Rouen in February 1440 to serve in Somerset's personal retinue and reviewed troops with him at Bernay and Gournay, was to become one of the earl's principal servants.⁽⁵⁾ Richard Thornes, given the charge of Dorset's hôtel at Rouen in 1440, was described as 'notre serviteur'.⁽⁶⁾ The two

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4063.

(2) For example, recruiting and paying additional troops for an escort service outside the gates of Rouen (BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3934).

(3) BN, Pièces Originales 1473 (Henneforde)/8, 15; 1315 (Gerard)/8; 2835 (Thornes)/4; 2019 (Montferrand)/38; P. Le Cacheux, Rouen au temps de Jeanne d'Arc, xlviii, xlix, liv, lv.

(4) The personal retinue of great lords were often based in Rouen: Le Cacheux, op.cit., xlix (For a muster of Dorset's retinue based at Rouen, 25 July 1439, see ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 3, II/3). They always accompanied their lord on field service (Dorset's retinue was at the siege of Harfleur from 8 August 1440: AN, K66/1/32).

(5) BN, Clairambault 200 (Somerset)/ 86, 89. Somerset's personal retinue included his secretary Jacques Brucelles, his usher Thomas Vaughan and a number of professional soldiers (ibid., 188).

(6) BN, Pièces Originales 1017 (Dorset)/6.

were typical of a group of men, experienced soldiers or administrators in the duchy, who were to form an association with the Beauforts. Some had previously served under other lords in the war in France, such as James Standish, the Lancashire captain who had served under Bedford for fifteen years and after his death was retained by Edmund, or John Nanfan, a member of the earl of Warwick's affinity who later was to become closely associated with John, earl of Somerset.⁽¹⁾ Others had had no particular connections with members of the nobility.⁽²⁾ During their period of influence in Normandy from 1439-40 the Beauforts relied for the most part on existing members of the military administration, and the garrisons of their captaincies reveal few changes of personnel.⁽³⁾

Edmund Beaufort, as a principal member of the governing council, was continually occupied in routine defence matters, particularly for eastern Normandy. Occasionally his messages to garrison captains, if of particular importance or secrecy, would not even be committed to writing but were delivered orally. Such was the task of a pursuivant arriving to see the captain of Gisors, 'dire certaines choses secretes de bouches', who returned as fast as possible with the captain to Dorset, now at Talbot's castle of Longempré near Rouen.⁽⁴⁾ Another message, to the captain of Honfleur, referred to him 'ayant certaine charge de guerre et de trait

(1) For James Standish's connection with Edmund Beaufort see A. Marshall, thesis cit., 114. John Nanfan was left an annuity of £60 a year in John duke of Somerset's will (PRO, E159/224, K.R. Recorda, Michaelmas, m.17).

(2) One such professional soldier, Richard Ditchfield, had served under Edmund at Louviers in 1431. He was a member of Dorset's personal retinue from July 1439 to November 1440 and was later to join Somerset's ill-fated expedition in 1443 (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 3, II/3; BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1449; Marshall, thesis cit., 114).

(3) Marshall, thesis cit., 114-22.

(4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4012.

pour la garde de la riviere', a necessary precaution with Harfleur and Dieppe held by the enemy.⁽¹⁾ On a more mundane level various small repairs were ordered by Dorset during March 1440, to the clock in the castle (the weights needing replacement) and to the council chambers.⁽²⁾

By July 1440 the question of the supreme command in Normandy was finally decided when Richard duke of York was appointed lieutenant-general and governor for a five-year term.⁽³⁾ Again York required a considerable amount of time to raise his own army, which did not arrive in Normandy until the spring of 1441. In the meantime, with preparations underway for the siege of Harfleur John Beaufort retained his post of 'lieutenant general sur le fait de la guerre'. This was a practical and necessary arrangement in view of the considerable military undertaking the investment of Harfleur represented, and Somerset's commission terminated when the town finally fell at the end of October.⁽⁴⁾ A similar arrangement may have been made for the captaincy of Rouen, which again had been taken over from Dorset by York (through a lieutenant) in November.⁽⁵⁾

In July a treaty was signed between Jean V, duke of Brittany and Somerset, the king's representative in the duchy, in which the Bretons

(1) Ibid., /4010.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3991, 3992.

(3) He was appointed on 2 July 1440 (Rymer, X, 786). He had indented in September for the considerable force of three earls, four barons, six bannerets, thirty knights, 900 men-at-arms and 2,700 archers (PRO, E404/57/130).

(4) In his last quittance for his monthly pension of 600 livres tournois for October, Somerset was styled 'nagueres lieutenant general et gouverneur sur le fait de la guerre' (3 November 1440): BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.33.

(5) York was holding the captaincy of Rouen by November 1440 (BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1480).

undertook not to shelter enemies of England (a provision directed against the problem of piracy, though it would have been equally applicable to the routiers on the marches).⁽¹⁾ However the most important event was the preparation for the siege of Harfleur. Since its recapture by the French in January 1436 the activities of the enemy garrisons had severely disrupted river traffic on the Seine. The English had been forced to use Honfleur as the major port for eastern Normandy, and to mount a constant guard against marauding French ships.⁽²⁾ The investment of the town required a large allocation from the duchy's resources. The Norman estates, which had met in Rouen in June, had voted 50,000 livres tournois specifically for the siege. Evidently it was short of the amount needed, for at the beginning of August attempts were being made to raise money from noblemen and churchmen.⁽³⁾ This was the occasion of a large loan from Dorset himself, some 12,346 livres tournois, which was paid back in two instalments in November 1440.⁽⁴⁾

Troops were already in the field in July, 'en attendant que le siege soit mys devant Harfleur'. This was a small army under Fulkes Eyton of 100 lances and 300 archers, which was based in the Pays de

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- (1) The text of the treaty is in Rymer, X, 788 (11 July 1440). For the safe-conducts granted by Somerset to the Breton negotiators, see BL, Add. Ch. 12064.
- (2) The damage caused by the French garrison is revealed in the Archives Communales de Lisieux, CC 1, Register 10, where boats laden with salt for the town were all sunk by the enemy before they were able to reach Honfleur.
- (3) Ch. de Beaurepaire, Les États de Normandie sous la domination anglaise, 72-3. Although Beaurepaire says that the sum granted by the estates towards the cost of the siege of Harfleur is not known, one document gives the exact figures: a total grant of 100,000 livres tournois of which 50,000 livres tournois was specifically for the siege: Collection Mancel (Musée des Beaux Arts, Caen), Manuscrit 3, no.128. Lisieux was among towns contributing loans for the siege (Archives Communales de Lisieux, CC 1, Register 17).
- (4) The sum, advanced at the beginning of the siege, was paid back on 13 November 1440: BN, Ms. Fr. 26427 (Collection Blondeau)/107, 120.

Caux.⁽¹⁾ Artillery was being assembled at Rouen.⁽²⁾ At the end of July a council of war consisting of Somerset, Dorset, Talbot and Fauconberg, made provisions for the conduct of the siege. Dorset was to take charge of the investment, with a force of 500 men-at-arms and 1,500 archers. Somerset would keep a smaller army of 100 men-at-arms and 300 archers in the field to meet any new enemy threat.⁽³⁾ The dispositions made by this council benefited from the experience of Talbot, who had faced similar problems in undertaking the siege of Tancarville in 1437. Faced with nearby French garrisons at Dieppe, Harfleur and Eu, Talbot had successfully combined a naval blockade of the Seine and an extra field force, retained to combat any infiltration of the enemy. The siege had commenced in August 1437 and Tancarville finally fell in November of the same year.⁽⁴⁾ With these arrangements settled, troops for the siege were mustered early in August at Pont-Audemer, Caudebec and Honfleur, and Dorset himself arrived at Harfleur on 10 August, and reviewed many of the garrison contingents over the next few days.⁽⁵⁾ With Dorset were Talbot, John Salvain, bailli of Rouen, Fulkes Eyton and many other

(1) AN, K66/1/23. This small army may have confused Monstrelet, who thought that the siege had started in April (Monstrelet, V, 418). Messages were sent from Dorset and the council at Rouen (25 July) to Eyton and the earl of Somerset at Caudebec, concerning 'le fait dudit siege de Harfleur': V. Hunger, Quelques Actes Normands XIV^e-XVI^e siècles (Paris, 1909-11, 3 vols.), II, 66-68.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 1929 (Merbury)/15: Payments for the carriage of two bombardes and other smaller cannon to be sent to Rouen 'pour mener au siege qui len voilloit mettre a harfleur' (Vernon, 8 July 1440).

(3) AN, K66/1/26. There is a transcript of this document in Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont, 266-8.

(4) S. Deck, La ville d'Eu, 53.

(5) His personal retinue was mustered at Harfleur on 8 August (AN, K66/1/32). Musters of many garrison contingents newly arrived at the siege were taken over the next few days (eg. from Lisieux and Caen: BN, Clairambault 220/27-9). But the full figure of 500 men-at-arms and 1,500 archers was not met and at the beginning of September Dorset was trying to make up the numbers by recruiting from those troops outside the regular garrisons: Pierpont Morgan Library, Autograph Ms. (10 September 1440).

captains.⁽¹⁾ Companies of soldiers were to arrive outside Harfleur from all over Normandy, and retinues were even sent from the garrisons in Maine, in what was to be the last major siege undertaken during the English occupation.⁽²⁾ The operation was made far more difficult by the incursions of French troops. On 13 August an urgent message was sent to Dorset and Talbot at the siege that a large number of the enemy were assembling in the area of Argentan with the intention of breaking the investment.⁽³⁾ This may have been the reason for a large increase in the number of troops Somerset himself was retaining to cover the siege, to 400 lances and 1,200 archers, which was to be mustered at Bernay on 26 August.⁽⁴⁾

The methods by which the siege of Harfleur was undertaken are of some interest. Monstrelet, who provides much detail about the operation, describes how the English had fortified their camp 'de grans fosses tout autour de leur ost, et laissant en aucuns lieux convenables, issues et

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- (1) Fulkes Eyton brought a large retinue from his captaincy at Caudebec (thirty lances and 90 archers). John Salvain, bailli of Rouen, arrived with Dorset on 8 August with a retinue of twenty archers: BN, Clairambault 158 (Dorset)/17; Pièces Originales 198 (Salvain)/7. However the list of captains who arrived for the siege given by Monstrelet is partially inaccurate in that some (Fauconberg, Gough) were in fact serving in Somerset's field army, and only arrived at Harfleur at the end of the siege. Talbot was the principal commander after Dorset.
- (2) AN, K66/1/22 et seq.
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4098.
- (4) After Dorset had left for Harfleur, Somerset had remained in Rouen for about a week, taking charge of the treason proceedings against Guillaume d'Auberyve, archdeacon of Coutances (for mandates from Somerset and other members of the Grand Conseil from 4-9 August see ADSM, G 1164). He had moved on to Lisieux by 16 August where he stayed in the bishop's palace for several days before going on to Bernay to muster his army (Archives Communales de Lisieux, CC 1, Register 17). Fauconberg, who arrived at Bernay on 26 August, was his principal captain (AN, K66/1/35). The first reference to the increase in strength of Somerset's field army is on 20 August when wages of 10,500 livres tournois for the force of 400 lances and the archers were despatched from Rouen to Somerset at Bernay (BN, Ms. Fr. 26427/106).

entrees ...' with watchtowers running along the top.⁽¹⁾ This was instead of the commoner method of constructing bastilles, small fortresses, around the town.⁽²⁾ This old system of circumvallation, the building of separate bastilles (as in the siege of Orléans) became regarded as an obsolete, far less effective strategy.⁽³⁾ The English artillery, '... bombardes, canons et grans engiens volans' kept up a continuous bombardment.⁽⁴⁾ The expenses accounted by William Forsted, the royal master of ordnance, give a vivid picture of this. The great guns, the bombardes and veuglaires (which each had individual names like 'Scelerine' or 'Bedford') occasionally cracked or split under the strain. A continuous stream of them were ferried back to Rouen, by land or river, to be repaired. Powder, charcoal, sulphur, shot, fuses, were regularly carried up to the siege.⁽⁵⁾ A sea blockade had also been set up, with ships from Normandy and England, and defences along the coast and mouth of the river with an additional detachment stationed to guard them.⁽⁶⁾

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- (1) Monstrelet, V, 418-9. Workers, manouvriers, had been ordered to attemble from Argentan and Exmes on 13 August (BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4103). By 23 August a force of masons, carpenters and other workers under the supervision of Robert le Sec had been retained by Dorset for the duration of the siege: ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 9; ADC, F (Fonds Danquin) 1341/2, 3.
- (2) A.H. Burne, The Agincourt War: a Military History of the Latter Part of the Hundred Years' War from 1369-1453 (1956), 292.
- (3) M. Vale, War and Chivalry, 143, citing an observation by Jean de Bueil in his Le Jouvencel.
- (4) Monstrelet, V, 418-9.
- (5) BN, Pièces Originales 1202 (Forsted)/7.
- (6) Monstrelet, V, 418-19. There are references to payment for 'le navire' (BN, Ms. Fr. 26427/108), 'du navire gens de guerre et maronniers d'icellui ordonne pour la garde de la gueulle de la Riviere de Seine' (Ms. Fr. 26067/4164). Also some ships were sent from England (Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 29-30). The need for a strong force to keep the sea if a siege of Harfleur was to be undertaken was stressed in York's own articles of service before his appointment as governor in July 1440 (Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 588). More artillery was also being shipped in during the siege, eg. two bombardes sent from Cherbourg on the orders of Dorset on 17 August (Inventaire de la Manche, II, 142, citing A4108/7), and also cannonball carried from the vicomté of Caen, 20 September 1440 (BL, Add. Ch. 12069). Extra troops recruited by Dorset from outside the garrison system

Somerset and his newly raised army took the field late in August. To combat the possibility of a French attack on Fécamp, the earl installed a garrison there (11 September).⁽¹⁾ This force was in a rather isolated position, and Somerset experienced difficulties in ensuring that the new detachment received wages and supplies.⁽²⁾ He then briefly stopped at Caudebec (12 September) leaving more troops there before returning to Rouen.⁽³⁾

The main French relief force, now that the revolt of the Praguerie was almost over, was gathering in Abbeville during September under the counts of Eu, Dunois and the captain La Hire. Dorset had employed a number of spies to travel into Picardy and the marches to report on the enemy.⁽⁴⁾ The most critical phase of the whole siege was approaching. Somerset prepared fresh reinforcements from Rouen. A train of artillery and ordnance was assembled, to leave the city by 24 September, carrying cannon, lead shot, powder and fuses, bow strings, crossbow wires and

to make up the deficit in his siege army were also arriving during September and October: ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 22 (13 September); BN, Pièces Originales 1252 (Froghall)/2 (12 October).

- (1) Somerset had first passed through Caudebec and on to Fécamp where he was at the end of August (BL, Add. Ch. 12068). He then went to Harfleur where he and his brother must have discussed the covering action the army needed to take (3 September). He was at Fécamp from 8-11 September where he left a strong garrison of thirty lances and 120 archers, the principal retinues were under the marshal of Falaise, Richard Pondesay and Jenkin Baker, with Baker having overall command of the force (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.255; 27, f.17). Musters were taken on 11 September (BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1444). For the movements of the army see Map 7.
- (2) Somerset had been recalled to Rouen to discuss certain matters with the Grand Conseil. Ensuring that the garrison was properly supplied caused him some concern. Towards the end of September the sergeants of the vicomté of Orbec received urgent orders from Somerset to gather and send to Fécamp supplies for men and horses: BN, Pièces Originales 1684 (Lanperieri); Frondeville, La vicomté d'Orbec pendant l'occupation anglaise, 34-5.
- (3) He was back in Rouen by 14 September (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 27, ff.1, 21).
- (4) Stevenson, Letters and Papers II, ii, 308-13.

other supplies.⁽¹⁾ Somerset sent out orders to the Norman garrisons for more troops to join his company as he moved towards Harfleur. A contingent from his captaincy at Avranches (sixteen lances, thirty-five archers, all mounted) was ordered to rendezvous with the earl at Pont-Audemer. A small detachment was also sent from Regnéville.⁽²⁾ Troops 'vivans sur le pays' were also summoned, to muster in front of Somerset at Pont-Audemer on 26 September.⁽³⁾ The earl had reached Honfleur, on the other side of the river, on 30 September (the port was the base for the naval blockade) from where he was constantly sending out messengers to spy on the disposition of the enemy.⁽⁴⁾ Orders were sent to Fauconberg, and troops at Caudebec and Fécamp, to join the siege. Another force

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- (1) Somerset was in Rouen from 14-24 September. With virtually all resources in the duchy committed to the siege of Harfleur, it was necessary to make some sort of temporary provision for other places under threat. Somerset gave orders for a crue to be mustered for the garrison of Mantes under Richard Talbot on 20 September: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 27, f.27; BN, Pièces Originales, 2787 (Talbot)/38. It was to be recruited from those soldiers 'vivans sur le pays' and was to consist of 50 archers. The earl also made provisions for the safety of Vernon, in letters sent to the captain there on 18 September (BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 21289/158). Avranches was again in danger from French troops and on 24 September Somerset sent an urgent message to the vicomte of Valognes to provide the garrison of Avranches with money or goods to the value of 1,000 livres tournois '... qui n'a pas touché depuis longtemps le paiement de ses gages, et qui est menacée d'une attaque prochaine des ennemis..' (Inventaire de la Manche, II, 142, citing A 4108/8). Somerset was also engaged in preparing new reinforcements of both men and guns to be taken to the siege. Orders were given to William Forsted, royal master of ordnance (20 September) to prepare carts for the carriage of the earl's artillery, to be ready by 24 September (BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 1482/154, 155).
- (2) For the ordnance carried by the earl to the siege, see AN, K66/1/54. A contingent of sixteen lances and thirty-five archers had left Avranches by 25 September, and one lance and seven archers had been despatched from Regnéville. Both had been ordered to rendezvous with Somerset at Pont-Audemer, presumably early in October (BN, Ms. Fr. 25775/1482, 1485).
- (3) Somerset had sent orders to the sergeants of the vicomté of Orbec concerning the assembling of these troops: BN, Pièces Originales 2079 (le Muet).
- (4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4138 (A list of payments to messengers employed at Honfleur).

arrived under the captain Mathew Gough, which had been following behind Somerset's army.⁽¹⁾ On 8 October Somerset and the Norman treasurer crossed the river to the siege, in a balinger appropriately named 'le petit talbot'.⁽²⁾

Messengers were arriving regularly at the English camp with reports of the progress of the French relief army. On 9 October a report was received '... faisans mencion comme messires Charles d'Arthois soy disant Conte d'Eu le bastard d'Orleans la Hire et autre cappitaines et ennemiz du Roy estoient arrives en la ville de dieppe pour aller sur le siege de harefleur'.⁽³⁾ Further news arrived two days later. The French had left Dieppe and were passing through Arques.⁽⁴⁾ The English made no attempt to check their progress, preferring to keep to their defensive positions. Having reached Montivilliers, the French prepared an attack on two fronts. The count of Eu took charge of a naval force, while Dunois and La Hire led cavalry and infantry attacks on the besiegers' lines. According to Monstrelet the land attack, which took place close to the encampment of Talbot, was unable to break through the strong defensive works and the English archers took a heavy toll. Similarly

(1) These troops had mustered at Pont-Audemer on 29 September (BN, Clairambault, 163/82). Since no provision had been made for this force in the instructions to the Norman treasury, it was necessary for Dorset himself to pay their wages until the siege was concluded. The sums were settled afterwards (Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 308-13). Somerset himself had returned to Pont-Audemer early in October, when he sent out instructions for the assembling of all 'gens vivans sur le pays' in the bailliage of Rouen and also the summons of the arrière-ban to all those in the area capable of bearing arms (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 6, no.47, 2 October). With a large French relief force arriving all possible resources were being used to strengthen the investment.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4138.

(3) Ibid./4133. The news was carried to Dorset at the siege, and to Somerset, who had returned to Caudebec to bring up further troops.

(4) Ibid./4136, 4137.

the seaward blockade was too strong for French efforts, and after the failure of the combined attack (14 October) the French moved back to Montivilliers.⁽¹⁾ 'Cadron', Dorset's pursuivant, carried the news back to the council at Rouen, relating how '... les ennemis du Roy notre seigneur du fait assault vendredi dernier passe sur les seigneurs et les gens qui les avoient vallement repulsez et deboutez et gangue sur eulx ung pont de scales et autres choses...'.⁽²⁾

The failure of the French assault sealed the fate of Harfleur. In Monstrelet's account, the count of Eu challenged the earl of Somerset to single combat, a request not surprisingly refused. Seeing nothing further could be done to aid the siege the French moved back towards Picardy. Apparently the wives of the principal commanders arrived from England to see the last stages of the investment.⁽³⁾ Within a fortnight the town had surrendered. The exact date is not clear, but on 28 October Somerset, certifying supplies from the royal master of ordnance for the provision of his artillery train, spoke of '... au siege dernièrement tenu devant la ville de Harfleur'.⁽⁴⁾ The news was despatched to England on the orders of Somerset, Dorset and Talbot.⁽⁵⁾

Somerset's own commission of authority as 'lieutenant-general sur le fait de la guerre' had terminated at the end of the month and he seems

(1) Monstrelet, V, 421.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4145.

(3) Monstrelet, V, 422-3. The countess of Dorset, who had been in Rouen during the summer, was at the siege with their young son Henry by 3 September (BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4090; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26,f.475)

(4) AN, K66/1/54.

(5) BL, Add. Ch. 459.

to have returned to England straight away.⁽¹⁾ Dorset stayed on a little longer. He was at Montivilliers on 2 November (which had surrendered with Harfleur), where he received the oath of allegiance from an inhabitant of the town, to whom he restored his possessions and lands. The bullette referred to a clause in the surrender treaty between Dorset and the count of Eu, now lost, but presumably concerning the status of Frenchmen who had remained loyal to England in the two towns.⁽²⁾ A reception was prepared in Rouen by the council for Dorset, Talbot and Fauconberg on their return, Dorset being presented with two gallons of hypocras.⁽³⁾ On 12 November the considerable expenses for repair of ordnance, and extra equipment for the siege were certified by him.⁽⁴⁾ Other diverse payments included the reimbursement of Dorset for wages he had paid to crossbowmen of the cinquantaine whom he had called up from Rouen during the siege.⁽⁵⁾

The successful recapture of Harfleur was a major breakthrough that opened up the possibility of further English recovery in the Pays de Caux, the principal target being Dieppe, still occupied by a French garrison. Talbot had taken over the captaincies of Harfleur and Montivilliers by

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- (1) He had received his last monthly pension on 3 November 1440, styled '... naguères lieutenant general...': BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre), no.33.
- (2) BN, Ms. Fr. 5330, f.136. The document, a near contemporary transcript, was taken from an original 'au fourme de bullette'. This, the bullette d'allegiance, was issued on the renewal of the oath of allegiance. Many of the townspeople of Harfleur and Montivilliers had left after they had been re-occupied by the English and had settled in French-held Abbeville (A. Huguet, Aspects de la guerre de Cent Ans en Picardie Maritime, 306-7).
- (3) ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 9.
- (4) BN, Pièces Originales 1202 (Forsted)/7.
- (5) Twenty crossbowmen had been sent to Harfleur (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.253). The cinquantaine, the town's guild of crossbowmen, met for military exercises at the tower Mal-si-frette. Although theoretically only to be used for town defence, the English occasionally summoned its members for important field operations: A. Chérueil, Histoire de Rouen sous la domination anglaise au quinzième siècle (Rouen, 1840), 157.

November 1440.⁽¹⁾ With the departure of the Beauforts before the end of the year, Talbot and Fauconberg took on the responsibility of dealing with new French encroachments around Louviers.⁽²⁾

Henry VI's gratitude over the conduct of the siege was marked by the despatch of the Garter to both Somerset and Fauconberg at Harfleur.⁽³⁾ The relief in the country generally was reflected by a comment in the Paston Letters:

'Also Freynchmen and Pykards, a gret nowmbre, kome to Arfleet for to arescued it; and our Lords wyth there small pusance manly bytte them, and pytte them to flyte, and, blyssyd be our Lord, have take the seide citie of Arflet; the wych is a great juell to all Englund and in especiall to our cuntre.' (4)

The recovery of Harfleur marked the end of the Beaufort brothers' participation in the running of Normandy, though the duchy had to wait until June 1441 before Richard duke of York finally arrived in Rouen. It was the culmination of a creditable involvement in the war effort, and it is worth emphasising that up to 1440 the record of the family in France had been consistently good. In particular, Edmund, earl of Dorset, had revealed himself an able and vigorous commander with successes both in the field and in difficult siege operations. He had co-operated well

(1) E. Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 311, n.7.

(2) A.J. Pollard, thesis cit., 174-5.

(3) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, I, 442.

(4) The Paston Letters, 1422-1509, ed. J. Gairdner (1904, 6 vols.), I, 40. The considerable efforts made by the English were noted by contemporary chroniclers: 'licet magnis laboribus et expensis, domini de Morten et Talbot satis humaniter recuperaverunt' (Giles Chronicle, iv, 18).

with Talbot and had shown good control over his troops. It was a record far superior to that of York, who in his previous lieutenancy in France in 1436-7 had left most of the military operations to Talbot.⁽¹⁾

The Beaufort's role in the government of Normandy from 1439-40 took place against a wider diplomatic background. The negotiations at Calais in 1439, and the decision to release the duke of Orléans in July 1440, aroused the deep antagonism of the king's heir, Humphrey duke of Gloucester, who launched an angry attack on Cardinal Beaufort and his policies. Humphrey was to claim indignantly that his own offers to serve in France had been rejected through the machinations of the cardinal, 'in preferring othre of his singular affection'.⁽²⁾ Whatever the tensions in the English council between Gloucester and the cardinal there is nothing to support the suggestion that the appointment of John earl of Somerset as 'lieutenant general sur le fait de la guerre' was intended to forestall Humphrey's own ambitions in France.⁽³⁾ It was a temporary post and there is clear evidence that the arrival of Gloucester as the new governor was both anticipated and expected in the spring of 1440. The reasons for his failure to do so are not clear. Similarly it is worth emphasising that Somerset's retention of his commission as lieutenant after the appointment of York in July 1440 was a purely practical military consideration in view of the siege of Harfleur; he was to surrender the office as soon as the investment was completed.

(1) For a critical appraisal of York's military ability see P. Johnson, thesis cit., 75-6.

(2) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 149.

(3) An opinion most recently expressed in R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 458.

The Beauforts' role in the administration of Normandy was a temporary one, and was intended to last until a successor to the earl of Warwick as governor of the duchy had been found. However a more permanent sphere of responsibility had been created in the appointment of Edmund as governor of Anjou and Maine in 1438. Such a post was commensurate with Edmund's previous good service, but was to create a division of interest in the matter of reinforcing the war effort. Whereas under Bedford Calais, Normandy and Maine had been linked through the regent's own authority, now separate areas of responsibility had been created. While an independent command at Calais was probably both inevitable and necessary, it would have been more politic to have placed the governance and administration of Maine firmly under the control of the king's lieutenant of France and Normandy. The revival of this separate command was to have unfortunate consequences, in which the ambitions of the Beaufort family were closely involved.

CHAPTER FOUR JOHN BEAUFORT, DUKE OF SOMERSET, AND THE
FRENCH EXPEDITION OF 1443

Richard duke of York and his large army finally crossed over to France in June 1441.⁽¹⁾ The advent of his impressive force, which included the earls of Oxford, Ormonde, Lords Bouchier and Clinton and Sir Richard Woodville, signalled an offensive in the Île de France to counter the inroads made by the French, who had taken Creil and were threatening Pontoise. However the major campaign on the Seine and Oise that summer failed to bring the army of Charles VII to battle and Pontoise, briefly recovered by the English, was lost again.⁽²⁾ The theatre of operations shifted to the Pays de Caux, where Talbot, after bringing further reinforcements over from England in the summer of 1442, had begun the investment of Dieppe. On 27 October 1442 the English contingent, fixed at a strength of 300 lances and 450 archers, made their first musters outside the town. In the next two months Talbot had built two bastilles to serve as bases for his troops.⁽³⁾ He had not enough resources to enclose the town properly. English troops and artillery were concentrated on a hill known as 'Le Pollet', under the command of Sir William Peyto, Talbot himself returning to Rouen in December. Further reinforcements from England were essential if any progress was to be made once the new campaigning season started.⁽⁴⁾

In the south Charles VII had launched a major campaign against English Gascony. His army had assembled in force at Limoges during

(1) The total strength of York's new expedition was two earls, four barons, six baronets, thirty knights, 900 men-at-arms and 2,700 archers (PRO, E404/57/130).

(2) Pontoise had been invested by Charles VII and despite English efforts to break the siege was finally taken by assault 16 September 1441 (Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII, III, 177-191).

(3) S. Deck, La Ville d'Eu, 59.

(4) Pollard, thesis cit., 185-7.

May 1442, with an artillery train under the management of Jean Bureau. Saint-Sever and Dax were captured, followed by other towns. Both Bordeaux and Bayonne were in serious danger, and the archbishop of Bordeaux left for England to appeal for help. But Charles had missed his opportunity. He had dispersed his force to besiege smaller fortresses, and much time was lost at La Réole, where the garrison held out for two months. A particularly cold winter further hindered operations, and Charles ordered a retreat to Languedoc on 23 December 1442. The immediate danger was over.⁽¹⁾

Normandy itself was troubled by fears of a new French attack. There were a number of scares during the summer and autumn of 1442 concerning Breton and French soldiers gathering for an assault on Avranches. Messengers were sent out in July 1442 to spy on the area around Fougères and to inquire of Breton troop movements. Others went to Mortain to try to find news of the marshal Lohéac, the French commander on the region.⁽²⁾ Lohéac, Louis de Bueil and others were found to be gathering men at the town of La Guerche on the Breton marches.⁽³⁾

These were the considerations before the English council when they discussed sending new armies to France early in 1443. On 6 February 1443, in the king's presence at Westminster, the council debated whether a relief force should go to Gascony, Normandy or both. The outcome was inconclusive, and any decision was postponed until the treasurer Cromwell had fully studied the financial resources available.⁽⁴⁾ But

(1) M. Vale, English Gascony, 122-125.

(2) G. Lasseur, Histoire de Domfront (Domfront, 1947, 2 vols), I, 387.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26070/4615, 4638. Some raids had been made on Avranches from La Guerche.

(4) PPC, V, 223.

it was clear that along with the need to counter the inroads made into English Gascony by Charles' army the council were very much afraid of a new French offensive against Normandy. An attack on Avranches was still seen as a very real danger, and an attempt was made to persuade the recalcitrant earl of Devon to take over a force to deal with the threat.⁽¹⁾ Moreover there were worries about the security of Rouen itself, now more vulnerable after the French capture of Evreux, Louviers and Conches.⁽²⁾

In such an uncertain situation, the prudent course would have been the despatch of substantial reinforcements to Normandy and a new lieutenant and an accompanying army to Gascony. In fact a completely new plan of campaign was to develop, the product of lengthy and important negotiations between the king, council and Somerset, the commander of the new expedition.

The recruitment and command of a major army from England was a great measure of responsibility for any nobleman assisting the war effort. As well as reinforcing the English military position, these expeditions were often used to wage war deep into enemy territory, which led to an important delegation of military and sometimes civil authority to the principal captain. The terms of indenture, the contract between the king and the army's commander, would specify the details of service, the number of men to be raised, the purpose and length of the campaign. If the captain had wider powers these would usually be enrolled in a

(1) PPC, V, 240. A letter was despatched from the council on 9 March 1443 but there was little response from the earl of Devon.

(2) Fears of a French offensive directed against Rouen were mentioned in the instructions Garter^{king}-at-Arms was to deliver from the council to York (5 April 1443): PPC, V, 259-64.

special commission of service. The captain himself, especially if a prominent member of the aristocracy or of the royal blood, would have an important say in how the army was to be used, and his own wishes would often be presented to the king in his articles of service before the indenture was drawn up.

These articles of service, which formed the vital background to a new command, themselves rarely survive. They were not enrolled, either under the seal of England or France, as was the final commission. The articles of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, who submitted a number of questions concerning the size and extent of his authority as the new lieutenant-general in France, survive in the form of a later transcript. They were discussed in council during May 1437, before Warwick's commission was formally drawn up on 11 July 1437.⁽¹⁾ John earl of Huntingdon made a number of important proposals concerning his appointment as lieutenant of Gascony for a six-year term, on 27 March 1439, and some of the details of these demands survive in the terms that were drawn up for his new commission.⁽²⁾ Similarly Richard duke of York had been involved in substantial discussions before he was appointed lieutenant-general in France and Normandy on 2 July 1440.⁽³⁾ His conditions of service had included the establishment of an annual war-time salary for the governor of £20,000. Yet the details of these and other far-reaching demands exist only in the collection of William of Worcester, servant of Sir John Fastolf (who was a member of York's council at this time).⁽⁴⁾ In contrast there survives an original copy

(1) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, i, lxvi-lxxi; PPC, V, 16, 22; Rymer, X, 674.

(2) M. Vale, English Gascony, 108-9.

(3) Rymer, X, 786.

(4) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 585-91.

of all Somerset's articles concerning his expedition, and the king's replies, which provides the major source for the background to the new campaign.⁽¹⁾

That the king turned to the Beauforts for the new post was not in itself surprising, in view of the family's active participation in the war effort from 1439-40. But the appointment of John earl of Somerset, rather than his younger brother Edmund, elevated a relatively inexperienced commander to a position of great responsibility. Discussions with Somerset had commenced by the summer of 1442. Interrupted during the winter months, negotiations culminated in the approval of Somerset's various articles of service by the council on 30 March 1443.⁽²⁾ The surviving copy of the articles was drawn up for chancellor Stafford for the same meeting by council clerk Henry Benet. It consisted of John's proposals concerning the details and scope of his war service and the king's answers. Following their endorsement, Somerset's indenture and commission of service were both drawn up.⁽³⁾

The course of these negotiations, which were to result in a significant change in war strategy and a major dispersal of royal patronage to Somerset himself, had their origins in military events of the previous summer. With news reaching the English council of the encroachments of the French in Gascony, plans to despatch a new army under Somerset had already been made in July 1442, when a certain 'ordenance and habilement of werre' was ordered to be delivered to the

(1) The roll, consisting of 23 articles, is filed under PRO, C47/26/28.

(2) PPC, V, 251-6. A transcript of the articles is given in Appendix 2,

(3) The indenture is filed under PRO, E101/71/4/916. The commission of service was enrolled on the French Rolls: PRO, C76/125, membrane 1 (4 June 1443).

earl or one of his servants 'to goo unto oure Reaulme of France in alle goodly haste...'⁽¹⁾ A decision to send Somerset to Gascony was indicated in a letter of the king sent to Bordeaux (21 September) stating '... we have appointed our cousin of Somerset and with him a right noble puissance of men of war to pass into our said duchy...'⁽²⁾ In fact no indenture was to be sealed that year. On 16 October 1442, at a meeting of the council in the king's presence at Eltham, Somerset presented his articles of service for the expedition.⁽³⁾ There are no further details of council meetings until February 1443, but in the interim plans for the new army seem to have been postponed, perhaps because of shortage of money.

The proposal to send John to Gascony was a sensible one both in view of the serious military reverses suffered there and the fact that the earl of Huntingdon, the previous lieutenant-general, had returned to England before his terms of service had expired. Huntingdon, who had been appointed on 27 March 1439 for a six-year term, had in fact been recalled by 21 December 1440, though the reason for this is not clear.⁽⁴⁾ With a French army under the personal command of Charles VII in the duchy, it was clearly necessary to despatch a high-ranking member of the nobility to organise resistance to the enemy. However, discussion concerning a new army was revived early in February with the council now considering the alternative merits of sending a relief to Gascony, Normandy or both. Any decision was postponed until the treasurer, Cromwell, had studied the financial feasibility of the plan.⁽⁵⁾ Meanwhile the king contacted Somerset,

(1) PRO, E404/58/172, 173 (7 July 1442).

(2) Official correspondence of Thomas Bekynton, II, 216. The letter had reached Bordeaux by 22 October.

(3) PPC, V, 218.

(4) M. Vale, English Gascony, 115-6.

(5) PPC, V, 223.

apparently suffering from illness, to find out his intentions regarding the prospective expedition. On 27 February a 'credence' was drawn up in council, to be delivered to the earl by Adam Moleyns. Moleyns, the chief clerk of the council, was to inform Somerset that the king wished to be '... acertayned of his welfare'. He was then to deliver a brief memorandum, consisting of four principal items.⁽¹⁾ The first was to remind him of the discussions in the council meeting at Eltham (16 October 1442) concerning his proposed war-service, 'the whiche he hath alle tymes redyd hym self to'.

The second continued 'to lete hym have knowlache the Kyng hath daily worde both from his duchie of Guyenne and also from Normandie how hit is full necessaire in alle haste to see for secours and that withoute grete delay to the bothe contreys'. In the autumn of 1442 Gascony was the declared objective of the new army. However Charles VII had now withdrawn his forces and it was not clear whether Normandy or Gascony would be the target for a new French offensive.⁽²⁾ The third mentioned Somerset's ill-health, which had evidently prevented the earl from attending the meeting of the council at Westminster, the king requesting news of his 'recovery and disposission...'. Throughout the next month negotiations over the expedition were carried out through a succession of messages, delivered from the council by Moleyns and from Somerset by his servant Thomas Gerard, until Somerset was fit enough to attend council himself, on 30 March 1443.⁽³⁾

(1) PPC, V, 226-7.

(2) M. Vale, English Gascony, 123-7.

(3) PRO, E404/59/147 (payment of expenses of Adam Moleyns for riding to and from the earl of Somerset with messages of his and the king's); PPC, V, 233-5.

Finally, Somerset was to be asked whether he wished to take his army to Normandy or to Gascony and the number of men he wished to have. Somerset himself had emphasised the need for a 'suffisant puissance of men' to lead against his adversary, but it was to take some time before the final figure was fixed.⁽¹⁾ A note in the margin of the indenture revealed that in reply to Moleyn's visit John had requested the very considerable number of 1,000 men-at-arms or even more, 'trusting rather to have hade greater nombre thannes lesse such ye necessitee of help daily increaseth'. He left however the final decision to the king and council.⁽²⁾ Such a large figure, which suggested a total strength for the army of well over 4,000 men, was an indication of the importance of the new campaign.

These communications between king, council and Somerset suggested that in an unclear military situation the vital matter of the use of the expedition was to rest very much with John's own inclinations.

Neither Henry nor his principal councillors had decided on a clear objective for the new campaign. Instead, Somerset was given a remarkable latitude in shaping the strategy of this major military initiative - a testament both to the influence the Beauforts had with the king and Henry's own lack of firm direction of the war effort. But the raising of this new force was to receive priority over the allocation of further resources, both of men and money, for the use of the administration in Normandy. As such it indicated a dissatisfaction with York's own

(1) PRO, C47/26/28, article 5. When the indenture was first passed, 30 March 1443, the number of men-at-arms had not been decided. The indenture seems to have been re-submitted for minor alterations, and when it was finally sealed, 8 April, 800 had been agreed.

(2) PRO, E101/71/4/916. The indenture has many gaps, alterations and additions, made by members of the council and Somerset, and it is possible that this may have been a draft copy rather than the final version.

conduct of the war, and represented a dramatic attempt to regain the initiative from the forces of Charles VII. The discussions were to continue through March. In the interim the council began preparations for the campaign. Shipping was ordered to rendezvous at Camber. An appeal for funds was sent round the country, mentioning the needs of both Normandy and Gascony.⁽¹⁾ The purpose of Somerset's new army remained uncertain. Early in March a small force under Sir William Bonville, seneschal of Gascony, left for Bordeaux.⁽²⁾ Was this to be the advance force for the main expedition? By 30 March the indenture for the army had finally been drawn up, but its destination was still not clearly specified. Somerset was to do all possible for the relief and aid of Gascony 'if oure adversaire abide ~~there~~ during an hoole yere'. But in fact the army was to be paid normal not Gascon rates.⁽³⁾

An insertion at the foot of the indenture, which seems to refer to some form of commission of service, described the purpose of the campaign in wider terms, '... pour aler et mener notre dit armee en notre dit Reaume de France et duchie de Normandie et pais occupies et tenez par notre adversaire et lui faire guerre...'.⁽⁴⁾ By 30 March this note had been incorporated in the terms of appointment of Somerset as king's lieutenant in Aquitaine and '... notre Reaume de France es parties en notre trescher et tresame cousin le duc de York actuellement n'exerce le pouvoir a lui depar nous donner...'. It was the letter written

(1) E. Burney, thesis cit., 111.

(2) M. Vale, English Gascony, 125.

(3) As indicated by the terms of the indenture (PRO, E101/41/4/916) though on the back of the document the clerk had calculated both rates of payment. On these discussions concerning the purpose of the expedition see also M. Jones, 'John Beaufort, duke of Somerset and the French expedition of 1443', 87-90.

(4) Ibid., 87.

(5) This commission had been drawn out on 30 March (PRO, C81/737/6777). It was enrolled on the French rolls 4 June (PRO C76/125, m.1).

by the king to York on 5 April, in explanation of Somerset's new powers and the purpose of his expedition, that provided the clearest definition of what was hoped from the new campaign. The army was to cross to Normandy and, marching south, was to pass '... over the water of the Leyre into ground occupied by the ennemyes and therre use most cruel and mortel werre...'.⁽¹⁾ The wording of the letter suggested the English were hoping to counter a new French offensive from Anjou with this new force while York remained in Normandy to guard Rouen. The retaining of Somerset with a special free-ranging command may well have seemed the best solution in the circumstances.

The king's letter to York emphasised the importance attached to the expedition. By waging war deep into enemy territory, it was hoped to draw Charles VII into combat, and perhaps decisively defeat his forces. As such, the plan was an implicit criticism of York's own failure to bring Charles to battle in the Seine and Oise campaign of 1441. The new command unquestionably infringed on York's own position as king's lieutenant-general in France. Somerset was well aware of this, appealing to the king to secure York's 'consentement and goodwill' in the matter, seeing he had the 'power before of all the said Reaume and Duchie'.⁽²⁾

The extent of Somerset's new authority was revealed in his commission of service, which was sent to administrators in both Gascony and Normandy. The commission opened with a reference to the needs of Gascony and the other parts of France under English control. Since the king himself was unable at present to cross over, it had been decided to appoint a 'lord of our blood and lignage' in the matter of the waging of the

(1) M. Jones, loc.cit., 89.

(2) Ibid.

war. His 'cousin' Somerset was to have the necessary powers until his year's term of service expired to launch an offensive against towns and castles and lands at present occupied by the French. He had authority to treat with the enemy, to issue pardons and safe-conducts, and to summon masons, carpenters and other workers along with artillery and ordnance necessary for siege operations. Moreover he had complete discretion in the use of the army, and could not be countermanded by the king's council in England, or in Normandy or Gascony.⁽¹⁾

This was a military, not a civil appointment. It was to last only for the term of Somerset's indenture and pertained only to the needs of the new army. Nevertheless, the total independence of the command was certainly unprecedented. This was a reflection of Somerset's own wishes that his authority was to be final and that he should not be ordered, neither in England nor in France, to take on any enterprise against 'his own will and entent'.⁽²⁾ Since, as the king's letter to York clearly indicated, the new offensive was to be launched from the north, passing through Normandy itself before driving into enemy territory, this took on an added significance.

A more permanent sphere of responsibility had also been opened up for Somerset in France. The king had acceded to his requests to be appointed captain-general and governor of Anjou and Maine after his brother Dorset's term of office expired, and also to receive the major patrimony of the duchy of Anjou and the comté of Maine.⁽³⁾ This appanage had in fact

(1) PRO, C76/125, m.1; C47/26/28, article 11.

(2) M. Jones, loc.cit., 89.

(3) PRO, C47/26/28, article 22. Dorset had originally been appointed governor of Anjou and Maine in March 1438. If, as seems likely, his term of office was for seven years the new arrangement would have taken effect from early in 1445.

already been granted to Somerset's brother in July 1442, and was only available through the technical reason that the Chambre des Comptes in Normandy had not accepted the donation until letters of confirmation were received from the king.⁽¹⁾ The lands of Anjou and Maine had first been held by John duke of Bedford, from 1424, shortly before the successful conquest of Maine had been launched. The new bequest to Somerset, a major mark of royal favour, offered territorial reward for any tangible success by the expedition, which would be launching its offensive in these areas. But the controversial circumstances of the grant may well have alienated Somerset's brother Edmund, who was to be conspicuously absent from the new army.

Without doubt the expedition marked a significant change in the conduct of the war. In terms of strategy it was reminiscent of the memorandum presented to the English council by Sir John Fastolf in 1435 which had urged a separate field army be kept on the borders of Brittany, Anjou and Maine, to ravage the lands held by the enemy.⁽²⁾ However, the plans for Somerset's expedition were more ambitious. He was to strike deep into French held territory and to try if possible to engage the forces of Charles VII in a manner more similar to the great chevauchées of the late fourteenth century. The king's communication to York made this clear, emphasising the army's intention to cross the Loire, to seek and combat the French king himself. The English council may well have become impatient at the defensiveness of the overall position in France. By way of reward, if the campaign went well, the king had revoked his own customary right to possession of conquered territory, the indenture

(1) Ibid. The grant had originally been made to Dorset on 19 July 1442 (BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises, 3642, no.804).

(2) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 580 (advocating the despatch of 500 men-at-arms and the necessary archers to wage war in Anjou, Maine and the Chartrain).

containing the clause that Somerset, as principal captain, should have the right to 'such contrees landes townes castelles fortresses and places as he shal gete within ye said reaume and Duchie or elles where which he shal reduce into ye kynges obeissance...'.⁽¹⁾ The arrangements concerning the king's right to profits of war, the third and third of thirds, were also significant. It was allowed that when the accounts of the expedition were returned Beaufort would be given a rebate from the third and third of thirds for all extra expenses accrued during the course of the campaign in enemy territory. This would cover '... espies guides scalers ... heraults pursuivants trumpeters messagers or other riders...'. It could also be for the wages of extra troops which had been recruited or for additional ordnance. The rebate was to be on the authority of a certificate submitted by Somerset himself when he returned to England.⁽²⁾

Given such a plan of campaign, to mount an ambitious offensive for the recovery of lands occupied by the enemy and in an attempt to engage them in battle, a choice had to be made between a disembarkation in Normandy and in Gascony. Somerset, in his articles of service, had pressed strongly for the former. He had argued for a crossing at the 'narowesse sea', since the need for help in France was so urgent; the voyage to Bordeaux might be subject to storms and other delays and would take too long. Indeed Somerset repeatedly stressed the importance of his relief army embarking as soon as possible, and had attempted to negotiate an earlier muster date for his troops.⁽³⁾ By 30 March his proposals had

(1) PRO, E101/71/4/916.

(2) Ibid.; PRO, C47/26/28, article 10.

(3) PRO, C47/26/28, article 7. Somerset wished to embark 'in shortnesse of tyme that he be not taried in this land' (see M. Jones, loc.cit., 88-9). M. Vale (English Gascony, 126) described a meeting in February between Somerset and Beckington concerning the needs of Gascony, but the reference from Beckington's itinerary in fact reveals a visit to Master John Somerset, the king's physician. (Bekynton, Correspondence, II, 240). The bishop had meetings with Suffolk and the king but there is no evidence that he ever saw John Beaufort.

been agreed to by the king and council, and his commission was enrolled under the seal of France rather than that of Gascony.⁽¹⁾

Two matters concerning the preparation of the expedition were considered by Somerset to be particularly important. The first was the strength of the army. It was apparent that he was hoping for a large aristocratic contingent, although at the time the indenture was drawn up there seemed to be some uncertainty as to how many would actually join, '... as many as he may gete unto the nombre or undre of four barons eight bannerets and thirty knights ...'. There was also a measure of doubt as to the exact number of men-at-arms, which was not specified in the draft of the indenture. Somerset had originally requested 1,000 or even more, but by 8 April king and council had finally decided on the figure of 800. A large number of archers had also been agreed, the figure of 3,400 being unusually high by this stage of the war.⁽²⁾ The negotiations over the size of the army were a reflection of John's argument that for his campaign to be effective it was necessary for him to have sufficient strength to bring Charles VII to combat.⁽³⁾

The second concerned the arrangements for a large provision of ordnance and artillery. Somerset was allowed to appoint as many men as he wished for its construction and maintenance, and a team of eighteen men under

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- (1) PRO, C76/125 m.1. The only powers of Somerset's to be enrolled under the seal of Gascony were concerning coining rights in the duchy. Given at Westminster on 4 June 1443 (PRO, C81/737/6896), these were enrolled on 21 July, 'quod duranto tempore que ipse locumentis ibidem existet': PRO, C61 (Gascon Rolls)/132, m.13. In contrast the powers of Bonville were enrolled on the Gascon Roll, 12 December 1442 (PRO, C61/132, m.14). This was the result of Somerset's own wish that his authority be held under the seal of France before that of the seal of Gascony (presented in the council meeting of 30 March: PPC, V, 251-6).
- (2) PRO, E101/71/4/916. The number of 800 men-at-arms was specified in the warrant to the exchequer for payment of the first quarter's wages (8 April 1443): PRO, E404/59/163.
- (3) PRO, C47/28/28, article 5.

his master of ordnance John Dawson were busy in London through April and May assembling equipment. Preparations were noted by contemporaries, '... a grete ordinaunce of gones, Brigges, scalyng ladderis and many more other thinges'.⁽¹⁾ In addition, John had requested the manufacture of three particular items which he felt were necessary for his expedition. These included twenty carts of ribauldequins, small mobile field guns, that were to be provided along with the crew which would man and maintain them. Another interesting item was a bridge of barrels, '... that hath he desired for him maad and carried with him at ye kynges cost to passe ye Ryvers with that he shal fynde in his way', suggesting an intended crossing of the Loire or its tributaries. A further piece of equipment, a certain 'new ordonnance', had already been partially constructed, perhaps during the initial preparations for a new expedition in the summer of 1442, and had been brought to Southampton at Somerset's expense.⁽²⁾ All this was approved by the council, and arrangements made in a meeting of 3 April, where £100 was immediately assigned for the construction of the ribauldequins and it was decided to pay wages for two men for each cart of ordnance.⁽³⁾ The detail and size of the outlay for this equipment was unusual and formed a major expense for the crown though, in contrast to York's expedition of 1441, it did not include any heavy siege artillery.⁽⁴⁾

(1) A chronicle of London, 1189-1483, ed. N.H. Nicolas and E. Tyrell (1827), 151.

(2) PRO, C47/26/28, article 8.

(3) PPC, V, 256-8. The commission issued to John Dawson empowering him to arrest carpenters and smiths also mentioned the construction of 50 culverins (portable guns, often fired by hand rather than needing to be mounted): CPR, 1441-6, 199.

(4) £100 had been paid immediately for the construction of the ribauldequins (2 April 1443): PRO, E403/747. On 5 and 7 June, £1,000 was paid to Dawson for the construction of 'diverse ordonnance'. £200 was also issued to Dawson for the wages of eighteen men who had been working with him in the manufacture of these (PRO, E403/749). This last payment was part of a grant of £360, the remainder being for the wages of carters and construction costs for the bridge of barrels: E404/59/246 (5 June). The exchequer, lacking the immediate cash for the rest

Payment for the new expedition represented a major financial outlay at a time when parliament had made no contribution towards a campaign in France. The first two quarters' wages for the army totalled over £26,000, cash for the ordnance and shipping expenses several thousand more.⁽¹⁾

Massive new loans from Cardinal Beaufort enabled the venture to go ahead; it received priority over York's annual salary as well as any large scale

pledged jewels (PRO, E101/335/30). On 27 June, Dawson received £381 9s 8d, and on 6 July £102, towards the costs of bows, arrows, strings, saltpetre, sulphur and other such items. On 6 July £6 15s was also paid for the hire of barges to carry the ordnance down river to waiting ships at Tilbury (PRO, E403/749). In all, nearly £2,000 was assigned for ordnance for Somerset's expedition. All this expenditure was for field artillery and ordnance. York, crossing over to Normandy in 1441, had carried with him heavier siege equipment (six 'grete gonnes' and twelve 'grete Foulers'): Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 587. Such artillery would not have been suitable for the fast-moving campaign envisaged under Somerset.

- (1) On 6 April 1443, £13,515 19s 4d was paid to Somerset's servant Thomas Gerard, for the first quarter's wages (PRO, E403/747). This was for a force of four barons, eight bannerets, thirty knights, 758 men-at-arms, and 3,400 archers. The clause in the indenture concerning the aristocratic contingent of the army had allowed for as many barons, bannerets and knights as Somerset could recruit up to those figures, with the stipulation that any shortfall in numbers would be adjusted in the second quarter's wages. On 6 July, £11,972 15s 4d and on 26 July an additional £800 was issued for the wages of one banneret, six knights, 592 men-at-arms and 3,949 archers (PRO, E403/749). Because of the lack of participation from the nobility, Somerset had found it difficult to raise the required number of men-at-arms, and the council had allowed him a rebate from the figure laid down in the indenture on condition that they were replaced by the appropriate number of archers (at the accepted ratio of 3 archers to each man-at-arms): PPC, V, 281, 409. The total sum expended on the army's wages amounted to £26,288. Shipmasters had been employed since the beginning of April, arresting mariners and boats for the expedition, which were to rendezvous at the port of Camber. From the shipping account of John Hexham, who had been employed 7 March to 21 July, he had received a total of £1,353 (PRO, E101/54/4). From the entries on the issue roll it appears Peter Bowman received a total of £1,991. Small payments to a couple of other officers amounted to £203 (PRO, E403/749). In total over £3,540 was spent on providing shipping for Somerset's expedition. The cardinal contributed £1,666 13s 4d to these costs; in all his loans amounted to no less than £21,666 13s 4d (G.L. Harriss, 'Cardinal Beaufort - patriot or usurer?', 138-39).

assistance for Normandy itself.⁽¹⁾ For Somerset, the army's commander, a post had been created in accordance with his own wishes, allowing him complete discretion in his conducting of the campaign. Only one area of uncertainty remained, concerning the actual length of service. Although the indenture allowed for a full year, in which the second six months' wages would be paid on the basis of monthly musters in France, there remained a distinct possibility of peace negotiations with France being opened within this term of service. Clearly this was a matter that had been discussed by Somerset, king and council, with the prospect of the campaign being halted in the event, though one of his articles added that if the king '... like not ye offres of his adversaire in ye saide traitie he may go forth with his conqueste and prevail against his adversaire'.⁽²⁾

As a result of the new command, Somerset received several important marks of royal favour. His promotion to the rank of duke had been one of his conditions for leading the army, as was the grant of sufficient English estates to accompany the title. He also had achieved substantial additions to his landed position in France with the grant of Anjou and Maine. The king and council had been willing to allow alterations in his right of ownership of the appanage of St - Sauveur-Lendelin but his request for a further patrimony, the duchy of Alençon in southern Normandy

(1) Reinforcements under Talbot were dispatched from Winchelsea in July. 3,000 marks were assigned for the operations at Dieppe: PRO, E403/749 (6 July); Ramsay, Lancaster and York, II, 54. A small force under Louis Despoys was also sent out to Gascony: M. Vale, English Gascony, 128-9. The statement made by Burney, thesis cit., 100, repeated in E.F. Jacob, The Oxford History of England, The fifteenth-century, 1399-1485 (Oxford, 1961), 468, that the £25,000 allocated on 6 July was almost all for Somerset's expedition is not correct. Along with substantial payments for shipping and supplies for Talbot's troops entries under that date also include back payments for shipping for Somerset's army which had embarked in January and February 1440.

(2) PRO, C47/26/28, article 5.

held in the royal demesne since the death of Bedford, was refused by Henry.⁽¹⁾

It is likely that the new army's independent field of operations was viewed with much concern by the administration in France. In a meeting of the English council shortly before the expedition finally sailed, he was asked to explain again the purpose of his command to a high-ranking deputation from Normandy.⁽²⁾ But as to the reaction of York and his council to this, no record survives.

The king himself had put his trust in Somerset to achieve a breakthrough in the war effort. The Beaufort family had done him good service in the past, and John himself had performed competently in Normandy in 1440. But after a long period of captivity and a heavy ransom the new commander was relatively inexperienced and preoccupied with the problems of his own estate. At the time the indentures were sealed he had no heir and although his wife was expecting a child, Somerset was unsure whether he would see it before he embarked for France. In fact a

(1) M. Jones, loc.cit., 89-91. The petition answered by the council concerning Somerset's ownership of St- Sauveur-Lendelin is undated and filed under the year 1444 (PRO, E28/73). The inconsistency in the use of Somerset's title (sometimes he is styled duke, sometimes earl) suggests it was submitted at the time of the indenture and articles of service, 30 March 1443. Somerset's wish for the duchy of Alençon, and the king's answer, are contained in his articles of service, as was his request for the duchy of Anjou and county of Maine (PRO, C47/26/28, articles 15, 22). It has been plausibly suggested that this new appointment may have antagonised Edmund and turned him against his brother (B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 163-4), though there is no actual evidence for this.

(2) PPC, V, 288-9 (21 June 1443). The deputation from Normandy included Talbot himself, Sir Andrew Ogard (one of York's councillors), John Stanlawe (the Norman treasurer) and Jean de Rinel (secretary).

daughter, Margaret, was born 30 May. Moreover, the new duke's state of health was not good.⁽¹⁾

It soon became evident that Somerset was experiencing difficulties in the recruitment for the expedition. The usual procedure was for the leader to sub-contract for various numbers of troops with his principal captains. For example, James Standish, a Lancashire soldier, was mustering men for the army during May. A number of other men had connections with Somerset's brother, or, like Thomas Gerard or Thomas Vaughan, were members of his own household.⁽²⁾ But although professional captains were not slow to join the expedition, there was a conspicuous absence from the ranks of the nobility. At the end of May, Somerset was forced to seek a reduction in the number of men-at-arms he was contracted for, to be replaced by bowmen, as a result of a 'lakke of barons, bannerets and knights'. By July only one banneret had enlisted, Sir Thomas Kyriell, and six knights.⁽³⁾ In 1441 York had been accompanied by two earls, four

(1) At the end of March the king granted 'that yif the said my lorde of Somerset have issue by my lady his weiff and that anything come to my saide lord of Somerset but good whiche God defende thenne my said lady shall have the keeping of the issue aforesaid' (PPC, V, 252, 255-6).

(2) A detailed analysis of the surviving muster roll (PRO, E101/54/5) is to be found in A. Marshall, thesis cit., 133-41. Her conclusion regarding the expedition was that apart from the small group of men with definite Beaufort connections the majority were drawn from a pool of mercenary soldiers. Somerset's kinsman, John Bastard of Somerset (almost certainly the bastard of the first earl) who had also been captured at Baugé and had only been released through efforts of Somerset in 1442, was serving along with a few men from John Beaufort's English lands. The captains Thomas Wake, John Bellers and Everard Digby were tenants of, or held neighbouring lands to, Somerset in Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire: ibid.; Calendar of French Rolls, 357. Others like James Standish, Henry Green, Richard Ditchfield and Christopher Barton (a former servant of Cardinal Beaufort) had fought under Edmund Beaufort in previous campaigns in France (Marshall, thesis cit., 135). Of the rest most were professional soldiers. For the sub-contract of James Standish, recruiting men in Lancashire, see HMC, 10th Report, Appendix IV, 227.

(3) PRO, E403/749 (6 July 1443).

barons, six bannerets and thirty knights.⁽¹⁾ The figures for the new expedition presented a sorry contrast indicating that neither Somerset nor the purpose of the campaign could attract a following from the nobility.

Difficulties were also being experienced in gathering sufficient shipping for the transport of the army and large train of ordnance. The account of John Hexham, who had been impressing ships and mariners from the end of March, reveals boats brought into service from the French ports as well as all over England.⁽²⁾ Yet by the end of June there were still not enough to cover the expedition and two separate crossings were being proposed.⁽³⁾ Although artillery and supplies were being carried from London to Portsmouth early in June, the bulk of the ordnance did not leave the Tower until 6 July, when John Dawson hired several barges to bring it to waiting ships at Tilbury.⁽⁴⁾ Along with these delays, Somerset was finding it difficult to muster the army properly, the exceptionally large number of archers being assembled (almost 4,000) probably causing much of the difficulty. The original date of muster (17 June) had to be postponed, and musters taken on 3 July brought complaints by the commissioners of fraud

(1) PRO, E404/57/130.

(2) PRO, E101/54/4.

(3) PPC, V, 293-4. John Yerd, the king's harbinger (the officer responsible for the purveyance of lodgings for the army) was to accompany the first body across the Channel. Yerd had been employed from 7 May (PRO, E404/59/183).

(4) Some of Somerset's ordnance and artillery was taken down to Portsmouth on 7 June (PRO, E404/59/183). Construction of the larger ordnance seems to have taken longer. The bridge of barrels had not been completed on 21 June and it was not until 6 July that John Dawson hired 'showtis', large barges, to carry the equipment to waiting boats at Tilbury (PPC, V, 288-9; PRO, E403/749). The entry concerning the barges is printed in F. Devon, Issues of the Exchequer, Henry III - Henry VI, from the Pell Records (Record Commission, 1835), 446 (See also ibid., 444-5 for other entries concerning the expedition)

and malpractice by Somerset's captains. Another postponement resulted, with musters finally being taken near Portsmouth on 17 July.⁽¹⁾

Large expeditions often suffered delays before they were able to embark from the south coast but Somerset's army seems to have experienced greater problems than most before all was finally ready. A number of chroniclers refer to this, one remarking he 'moustred at Portesmouth diverse tymes and might not have redy passage which was grevous to ye contree'.⁽²⁾ The Brut mentions similar difficulties: 'And he abode longe time after in England, upon the coostes, to abide for shipping and peple that were not come to hym'.⁽³⁾ As the delay grew, extra finance had to be found for the continued payment of ships that had been assembled in May prior to the first muster date.⁽⁴⁾ Complaints began to reach London of the exactions of many of the troops billeted on the south coast.

These problems seemed to have caused growing strain on both king and councillors, who became critical of Somerset's conduct. A lengthy communication was drawn up in a council meeting on 9 July, to be despatched to the duke, in which the king blamed him for the difficulties with the musters.⁽⁵⁾ John's own explanation was found to be unsatisfactory; he was given a firm command that he 'shall fulfill the tenure of the said

- (1) The council had ordered proclamations to be made (8 July) that all persons engaged to join the duke of Somerset were to do so immediately, and to state that if any were still found in London the following Wednesday they would be arrested (PPC, V, 302).
- (2) 'Bale's Chronicle' in Six Town Chronicles of England, ed. R. Flenley (Oxford, 1911), 116.
- (3) The Brut, 484.
- (4) A day after the first muster date, on 18 June, Cardinal Beaufort lent £1,000 towards the payment of shipping already assembled at Portsmouth for Somerset's expedition (PRO, E404/59/277).
- (5) PPC, V, 303-4, 409-14.

endementure' and that 'alle excusacons cessing' he assemble his forces without fail by 17 July. Henry VI clearly felt let down by Somerset, reminding him of the generous patronage he had received and adding that '... he merveilleth gretely and noght withoute cause the long abood of his saide cousin on this side of the see and the grete and long delays of his passage to the Kynges ful grete hurte ...'. The evidence is clear that Somerset was out of favour, even before he embarked for France. The duke's lack of effective control over the assembling army was worrying, though the problems with the shipping and ordnance were hardly his fault.

Musters were finally taken on 17 July with the troops being reviewed at Portsdown, the stretch of open countryside to the north of Portsmouth. As in the campaign of February 1440, Somerset's servant, Thomas Gerard, took a principal part in organising the various contingents. Apart from the duke's own personal retinue (170 archers) the largest companies were under the experienced soldiers Sir Thomas Kyriell and Sir Robert Vere.⁽¹⁾ Even now Somerset did not immediately embark. According to the account in The Brut, he left for France on 21 July.⁽²⁾ It is possible that some of the army may have been shipped over then but Somerset was still at Portsmouth two days later when he appointed John Eltonhede receiver-general for his English estates during his absence.⁽³⁾ A further payment for the second quarter's wages, £800, was made to Gerard on 26 July, and allowing for the few days for him to return from London to Portsmouth, it seems likely that the expedition finally sailed at the end of the

(1) PRO, E101/54/5.

(2) The Brut, 484. Benet's Chronicle, 189, gives after 7 July.

(3) The letter patent was enrolled for safe-keeping at the exchequer. It was given at Portsmouth, 23 July, under the duke's seal and sign manual (PRO, E159/220, K.R., Recorda, Michaelmas, m.14).

month.⁽¹⁾ Orders were dispatched by the council on 2 August to local officials in the Norman Cotentin to take the musters of the army when it disembarked.⁽²⁾

The Norman chronicler, Thomas Basin, described the passage of the expedition across the Channel to Cherbourg. He mentioned a fleet of some 300 vessels, full of soldiers, horses and war equipment, and specifically referred to the bridge of barrels and the numerous pieces of artillery.⁽³⁾ The carriage of this ordnance, once the army had disembarked, seems to have presented particular problems. One of Somerset's first actions on his arrival in the Cotentin was to levy a charroy, a cartage tax, payable in the form of practical help or money. On reaching Coutances, on 12 August, he drew up a mandate to the viconte and élus of the town concerning the collection of the imposition:

'Comme pour proceder diligeanment a la conduite de l'armee a nous ordonee par mondit seigneur le roy et pour obvier aux dangiers des chemins des frontieres ou avons au plaisir de Nostre Redempteur en brief aler, soit besoing de advitullier le charroy portant noz ordonnances et habillements de guerre pour le vivre des gens et bestes qui icelles portent et conduisent pour certain temps, laquelle chose ne se pourroit bonnement faire ne acomplir sans avoir promptement finance pour poier iceux vivres, nous vous mandons et expressement enjoignons de par mon dit seigneur le roy et nous que, tantost incontinent et sans delay, appelez ceulx qui sont a appeller, vous faites assiette en la dicte viconte de Coutances sur les paroisses d'icelle bien et deuement, chacune selon sa possibilite, le forte portant le faible, de la somme de cinq cens livres tournois et icelle faites cueillir et lever par le receveur des aides en la dicte viconte lequel baillera

(1) PRO, E403/749 (26 July).

(2) CPR, 1441-6, 202.

(3) Thomas Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, ed. C. Samaran (Paris, 1933-44, 2 vols), I, 280-2. Basin, along with all the other chroniclers, both French and English, gives the strength of the army at around 10,000 men. These figures have been followed by B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 166. But the muster roll and exchequer payments show the fighting strength of the expedition that left England was around 4,600 soldiers and even if new troops had joined the army in Normandy it cannot have had greater strength than 5-6,000.

et delivera icelle somme a Jennequin Dawsson, escuier, maistre de nos ordonnances, qui les diz vivres et advitaillemens a baillez et delivrez aux dictes gens et charretiers pour la dicte cause.' (1)

While money was collected from some parishes, carts and their drivers were dispatched to Cherbourg, where the ordnance was still waiting. Provision was made for the supplies and equipment to be taken to the towns of Carentan and Montebourg, where more carts were waiting. The levying of this tax in the vicomté of Valognes, which was to be followed by others as the army moved further south, was certainly irregular and some parishes refused payment altogether. The ad hoc arrangement for the collection of the charroy led to much confusion, with many parishes being wrongly assessed. While some carts and drivers were hired only for a few days, others were retained for two or three months, evidently being used during operations in enemy territory in Maine and Anjou. (2)

These impositions cannot have been popular with the administration in Normandy. York had summoned a meeting of the estates at Caudebec towards the end of August and complaints may well have been raised. Robert Byote, the vicomte of Coutances, was unable to attend as he was still assisting in the collection of the charroy. (3)

Somerset had reached Avranches on 18 August. By now some 120 carts had been assembled to transport his army's equipment as it prepared to

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- (1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26071/4834. A transcript is to be found in S. Luce, Chronique du Mont-Saint-Michel, II (Pièces Diverses), 157-8.
- (2) AN, K68/19: the record of the royal inquiry into the collection of this tax. The inquiry was ordered in all the vicomtés of the Cotentin, Valognes (ibid., ff.3-18), Carentan (ff.20-65), St - Sauveur-Lendelin (ff.66-69), Coutances (ff.70-73), Avranches (ff.73^V) and Mortain (ff.74^V-75). See also E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 206-10; M. d'Autume, Cherbourg pendant la guerre de cent ans (Cherbourg, 1948), 48-9.
- (3) The estates were summoned to Rouen 18 August, but the meeting was moved to Caudebec. Byote was among a number of officials due to be present from the Cotentin; 's'est fait excuser disant que monsieur le duc de Somerset le avoit Retenu' (BN, Ms. Fr. 23189, f.17).

move into enemy territory. Their destination had by this date been decided on, the town of Pouancé in northern Anjou, held by the duke of Alençon, which was to be invested by Somerset's army.⁽¹⁾ According to the herald, Berry, the expedition picked up further reinforcements on the Norman marches.⁽²⁾ There was little contact with the Norman council at Rouen, which had witnessed the defeat of the English forces at Dieppe by an army under the dauphin only days after Somerset's troops had landed in the Cotentin. This lack of co-operation between Somerset and York hindered effective use of the new expedition, and Somerset's secrecy in this respect was strongly criticised by the chronicler Basin.⁽³⁾

The route of the army once it had crossed into enemy territory is not completely clear. The accounts of the chroniclers Basin, Berry and Monstrelet describe the army's route as moving down the marches of Brittany, Maine and Anjou, first seizing the Breton town of La Guerche and then encamping outside Pouancé. After raiding the surrounding countryside and defeating a French relief force, Somerset lifted the siege and marched back north. However the Breton chroniclers Gruel and Le Baud give a different route and chronology of these events. The army marched through Maine and Anjou laying waste to the countryside up to the walls of Angers itself. The captains lodged in the nearby abbey of St. Nicholas

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- (1) AN, K68/19, f.74, printed in S. Luce, op.cit., II, 159-60 (the assiette levied for Somerset's costs, 'pour aller en sa compagnie devant Pouance').
- (2) Berry, 263. An entry in an account of the war gains of the garrison of Tombelaine (January 1444) indicates one of the receivers had joined the army and had served against the French relief force at Château-Gontier (Luce, op.cit., II, 167). According to Gruel the army was joined by Somerset's brother Dorset as well (ibid., 181, '... et en estoit chief le duc de Sombresset, et le conte Dorset et Mathago;'). Dorset was present at council meetings in London July 1443 and February 1444 but there is no indication of his whereabouts in the interim (PPC, V, 298; PRO, E28/72/1). He did not, however, muster with the army, and his presence on the campaign seems unlikely.
- (3) Basin, I, 280-4. Dieppe had been relieved on 14 August.

of Angers. A chronicler from Anjou, Bourdigné, also describes the arrival of the expedition outside Angers and adds how a chance cannon shot from the walls of the city killed one of Somerset's men.⁽¹⁾

The arrival of Somerset's army in Anjou caused consternation among the French, who feared a major offensive. Charles VII, at Saumur, hastily despatched Jean Bureau to Tours to collect artillery for Durtal and other towns along the Loire where an English attack was feared to be imminent.⁽²⁾ An assault on one of the bridging points along the river would have marked an aggressive campaign, taking the war deep into enemy territory. However Somerset had by this stage decided on a far less ambitious course of action, to operate against French bases on the marches of Brittany, Anjou and Maine. After staying at the abbey of St Nicholas for two or three nights, the army swung north along the Oudon, passing through Segré and finally encamping outside Pouancé. Raiding parties were despatched into the surrounding countryside. It was at this stage that Somerset had intelligence of a French relief force assembling at Château-Gontier under the marshal Lohéac and sire de Bueil. According to Gruel, the French were over-confident and

(1) J. Bourdigné, Chroniques d'Anjou (Angers, 1842), II, 191. On the general course of the campaign see Gruel, Chronique d'Arthur de Richemont, 181-2; Le Baud, Histoire de Bretagne, ed. d'Hozier (Paris, 1638), 440. Gruel was present with Richemont in Anjou and Maine at this time. Le Baud, a contemporary of Gruel, was a compiler using a variety of sources. He often copied sections of Gruel's work; his value lies in the other sources he drew on, which give his account a wider range of detail. Le Baud's Histoire de Bretagne was compiled on behalf of Anne, duchess of Brittany, and was printed by d'Hozier in 1638. There does however exist an earlier unedited version of Le Baud's chronicle, 'Compilations des croniques et ystoires des Bretons', which was presented to Jean Seigneur de Derval. This version (a copy of which survives in the Bibliothèque Municipale d'Angers, Ms.941) contains occasional details not found in the later work.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 32511 (account of Jean de Xainçoins, 1443-4), f.85 (payment of Jean Bureau, master of artillery, for journeying from Saumur to Tours to collect artillery to send to Durtal 'et autres places sur le Riviere du Loire pour resister aux anglois quon disoit y aller mettre le siege'). Alarmed by Somerset's chevauchée, a special meeting of the assembly of Tours was summoned on 17 September to make preparations for the defence of the town (Archives Communales de Tours, BB 18, f.260).

advanced towards the English position without waiting for further reinforcements under Richemont. Their effort ended in disaster. Lodging for the night at the small village of Bourgneuf-Saint-Quentin, they were surprised and routed by Mathew Gough who had been sent out by Somerset with a large detachment of troops.⁽¹⁾

Despite the success of this action, in which a number of French prisoners were taken, the most important being Louis de Bueil,⁽²⁾ the English were making little headway at Pouancé. The castle was a very strong one, its high walls flanked by eleven towers, and it occupied an excellent natural position, being surrounded by two lakes.⁽³⁾ Given his lack of siege artillery, Somerset's decision to invest this stronghold was a poor one. After staying outside the fortress for between two or three weeks, John realised he was losing time, lifted the siege one night and marched north to the nearby Breton town of La Guerche.⁽⁴⁾ According to the Breton chronicler Le Baud, Somerset justified his attack on the town because the truce had lapsed and the new Duke Francis was in concert with Charles VII. La Guerche was not in a position to offer much resistance. Its walls were in disrepair and its castle dismantled. The inhabitants were surprised and having few soldiers in the town surrendered, whereupon Somerset occupied the place, arresting all those sympathetic to the French.⁽⁵⁾ The duke of Brittany was forced to agree to an indemnity of 20,000 salus d'or before the town was returned to him. The quittance for this arrangement survives and runs as follows:

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- (1) According to the account in Berry (ibid., 263-4) Somerset was outside Pouancé, not for two to three weeks but two months and the French relief force gathered at Craon not Château-Gontier. but Gruel's version of events comes from first-hand information.
- (2) Bueil was engaged in procuring his ransom March 1444 (Rymer, XI, 17).
- (3) C.L. Salch, Dictionnaire des châteaux et des fortifications du moyen âge en France (Strasbourg, 1979), 931.
- (4) M. Jones, loc.cit., 95.
- (5) P. le Baud, Histoire de Bretagne, 440-1.

'Nous Jehan duc de Somerset cognoissons et confessons avoir eu et Receu en ceste ville de la guierche de nostre trescher et tresame nepheu Francois duc de Bretaigne par la main de Matheu Leuice son tresorier la somme de dix mille salus d'or de bon or et de bon poys quelle somme nostre dit nepheu s'estoit oblige nous payer pour lui rendre en ses mains et obeissance la ville de la guierche que tenons pour le present. Et en oultre confessons que oultre ladite somme de dix mille salus d'or que a nous Recue nostre dit nepheu s'est oblige a nous et par son scelle de nous payer la somme de autres dix mille salus dedans nouel prouchain venant pour luy faire la Restitucion en ses mains de la dicte ville de la guierche ...'

This receipt for the 10,000 salus d'or already paid, under Somerset's sign manual and seal, was given on 16 October 1443.⁽¹⁾

The date of the document is important and supports the Breton accounts that the capture of La Guerche took place after the siege of Pouancé. The arrangement was for the other 10,000 salus d'or to be paid to Somerset before Christmas but it seems unlikely that it was delivered.⁽²⁾ The Breton embassy in London took up the matter with the English government, complaining of the misuse of Somerset's army, which was responsible for '... exploiz de guerre moult, creux et enormes...', including the capture and pillage of La Guerche and the surrounding countryside. Duke Francis had been forced to deliver an indemnity of 20,000 salus d'or to prevent further damage. A meeting of the English council (13 December) after discussing the matter, referred it to the king.⁽³⁾ Henry, who had taken a personal interest in maintaining good relations with duke Francis's brother Gilles, wrote a pained letter to Somerset ordering him to make

(1) Archives Dép. de la Loire-Atlantique, E122/48/18.

(2) A. Bourdeaut, 'Gilles de Bretagne entre la France et l'Angleterre', in Mémoires de la Société d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne, I (1920), 59-61. Bourdeaut describes the state of the town's fortification as poor. Archaeological evidence does however show that there was a castle in the fifteenth century (C.L. Salch, Dictionnaire des châteaux, 595) sited in the north-east of the town. However a list of fortresses and their condition, drawn up by the French in 1424, describes La Guerche as 'tout demolie et abatue' (College of Arms, M16, f.123).

(3) PPC, VI, 12-13, 17-18.

restitution for damage done and warned him to refrain from such activities in the future.⁽¹⁾ There is little doubt that this incident discredited Somerset in the eyes of the council and the king. To a commander faced with the uncertain situation on the Breton marches and unsure of the intentions of the new duke, the action may have been militarily justified. The status of La Guerche itself was ambiguous. Although just inside Brittany it was held by the French duke of Alençon. As such it was a regular base for raiding French and Breton troops, who had gathered there to launch an attack on Avranches only the previous summer.⁽²⁾ But the capture was to have unfortunate consequences. It threw great strain on Anglo-Breton relations and came dangerously close to provoking an outbreak of war. According to the Breton chronicler, Le Baud, Duke Francis, outraged at the capture, wanted to raise an army to drive the English out, but was dissuaded by the lords of his council, who wished to preserve the truce.⁽³⁾ Somerset's action had proved to be a dangerous and provocative miscalculation.

For most chroniclers this incident marked the end of the campaign. However from the account of the Burgundian Monstrelet and some surviving

(1) PPC, VI, 22-23.

(2) La Guerche, part of the seigneurie of Beaumont, had come into Alençon's possession through the dower of Marie de Bretagne.

(3) A significant passage in the manuscript of Le Baud's 'Chronique de Bretagne', not repeated in his later Histoire de Bretagne, referred to this: 'Et comme celle emprise venoist a la notice du duc de bretagne il vould de toutes pais assembler ses gens d'armes pour a force chasser les dictes angloys de la guierche et les faire vuider son pais mais il en fut destourne par ses barons et les autres gens de son conseil pour ce que bien legierement ils trouverent paix avecques lesdictes angloys qui par ce mean vindrent ^{de}ladicte ville de la guerche et tout le pais de bretagne et sen retournent en normandie' (Bibliothèque Municipale d'Angers, Ms. 941, ff.379-379^v). The accounts of the town of Rennes show many new cannon being installed for its defence after the capture of La Guerche: J.P. Leguay, La ville de Rennes au quinzième siècle à travers les comptes des Miseurs (Paris, 1968), 281.

document evidence it is clear that the army was in the field until late December. But the army's movements over the next month are difficult to reconstruct. The administration in Normandy were unsure what the expedition was doing. At the end of October a messenger was sent from Lisieux to 'les parties de Bretagne', to seek out Somerset and find news of his army. He was to report back to York at Rouen.⁽¹⁾

By the beginning of November the army was re-grouping around Le Mans. The French undertook fresh measures to defend the Loire, but no new force was raised to resist Somerset in the field, and he was able to move with impunity in Maine, northern Anjou and the Touraine.⁽²⁾

Early in December he had decided to invest the French-held castle of Beaumont-sur-Sarthe in Maine, and further reinforcements were raised in Normandy.⁽³⁾

The loss of this fortress to the French in 1440 had cut the road from Alencon to Le Mans and it is clear that its recapture was seen as an important priority. A relief force was expected to arrive and Somerset took further modest reinforcements from the nearby garrison of Fresnay-sur-Sarthe.⁽⁴⁾ In the event no French troops appeared and the castle surrendered. Osbert Mundeford, Edmund Beaufort's captain at Le Mans, took over the command.⁽⁵⁾ After reducing the surrounding

(1) H. de Frondeville, Compte de Jean le Muet, vicomte d'Orbec pour la Saint-Michel, 1444 (Caen, 1936), 275.

(2) On 10 November Charles VII sent troops and artillery to Château-du-Loir under the command of La Hire, 'les anglais qui de present sont assemblez environ le mans veulent mettre le siege' (Archives Communales de Tours, BB 18, f.269). On 13 November reports came of the English preparing 'de courir sur la Riviere de Loire' (ibid., CC 29, ff.83^v-84). With no opposition in the field Somerset was able to levy appatis on all the region up to the Loire: ibid., BB 18, f.275 (29 November).

(3) Troops were assembled under Richard Harrington at Caen on 14 December, to join Somerset at Beaumont-sur-Sarthe (AN, K67/21, nos.9,10; Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, i, 59.60).

(4) R. Triger, 'Le château et la ville de Beaumont-le-Vicomte pendant l'invasion anglaise (1417-50)', Revue Historique et Archéologique du Maine, L (1901), 59-60; Monstrelet, VI, 66-7.

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26074/5295.

area into English obedience and reinforcing the frontier garrisons, Somerset returned to Falaise.⁽¹⁾ By now the first six months of service were up but no further money was made available and the army was disbanded in western Normandy.

The break-up of the expedition in the Norman Bessin confused some English chroniclers who thought that most of the soldiers had been slain.⁽²⁾ In fact this influx of wageless troops was to cause havoc in the surrounding countryside. In February 1444 Henry ordered the Norman government to hold an inquiry into the many complaints of extortion and robbery coming from western Normandy. In March instructions from Caen concerning the assembling of these soldiers living off the land explicitly referred to those '... qui darrainement sont venus en la compagnie de monsieur le duc de Sommersed...'.⁽³⁾

Both French and English chronicles tell of the very hostile reception given to Somerset when he returned to England early in the new year.⁽⁴⁾ According to the herald Berry, he was held personally responsible for the misuse of the army, while Basin described the criticism of the

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- (1) Monstrelet, VI, 67. Somerset was back at Falaise by the end of December; he then returned to Caen (BL, Add. Ms., 11542, f.29).
- (2) Gregory (*ibid.*, 185) thought most of the army (3,700 soldiers) had been lost. Also the comment in 'A short English chronicle' in Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles, ed. J. Gairdner (Camden Soc., XXVIII, 1880), 64: 'This yere came the Duke of Somersed oute of France, the which had lost myche of his peple', (1444).
- (3) Henry had ordered the inquiry on 27 February 1444 (PRO, E404/60/253). Reference to Somerset's troops came in instructions to local officials: BN, Pièces Originales 2411 (Queniret)/5. Much of the ordnance and equipment of the expedition was later found deposited with Somerset's lieutenant at Avranches (AN, K68/19, f.74).
- (4) The English Chroniclers give conflicting dates for Somerset's return to England. According to The Brut, it was 'anon after Ester' 1444 (i.e. after 12 April): *ibid.*, 484-5. But this extremely late date is contradicted by document evidence which shows that Somerset was in London on 16 March 1444 (BL, Add. Ch. 12211). The date given in Benet's Chronicle, 190, 'circa festum Circumcisionis' (i.e. around 1 January 1444), seems most plausible.

expedition and the duke's disgrace.⁽¹⁾ English accounts tell how Henry himself was angered. Benet's chronicle noted that Somerset, returning with so little achieved, incurred the wrath of the king.⁽²⁾ Others described his banishment from royal favour, after returning from a campaign in which he had wasted much money and done very little.⁽³⁾ The Croyland Continuator said it was rumoured that the duke's death soon afterwards may have been suicide, he being unable to brook his disgrace and exile.⁽⁴⁾ In fact we know little of the remainder of Somerset's life. In March he was in London engaged in negotiations concerning the release of his French prisoners, who then crossed over to his captaincy of Cherbourg to try to secure their ransoms.⁽⁵⁾ He died, almost certainly of illness, at Wimborne in Dorset, 27 May 1444, and was buried in the Minster.⁽⁶⁾

The duke's disgrace is substantiated by the exchequer proceedings that began shortly after his death. The accounts of the expedition were not returned and on 12 June 1444 writs of distraint were issued against

(1) Berry, 264; Basin, I, 284.

(2) Benet's Chronicle, 190.

(3) Giles, iv, 31: '... quia infra breve in Angliam rediit, absque sibi aut regno lucro aut honore, unde rex cum oculo dextro non respexit tempore eius vitae ...'; 'Brief notes, 1440-3', in C. Kingsford, English Historical Literature, 341: 'Ubi parvum profuit, set stipendium regni inaniter consumpsit ...'.

(4) The Continuation of the history of Croyland, 399. It also has been suggested that the rumours of Somerset's suicide were obliquely referred to in one of the poems of Richard Roos, court poet (E. Seaton, Sir Richard Roos, Lancastrian Court Poet, 355-7).

(5) BL, Add. Ch. 12211; Rymer, XI, 17.

(6) 'An English Chronicle from 1377 to 1461', Camden Soc., LXIV (1856), 60. There is a brief reference to the burial of the duke in the churchwarden's accounts for Wimborne Minster, 1443-4, and to the erection of a small monument (a window panel) in the church (Dorset R.O., P204/CW23).

Somerset's executors concerning outstanding receipts for wages and ordnance.⁽¹⁾ With a number of payments still unaccounted for, sheriffs in Yorkshire seized the late duke's holdings in the lordship of Cottingham in January 1445.⁽²⁾

Further measures were taken when on 13 December 1445 a royal letter was sent to the Norman treasury.⁽³⁾ The sums owed by Somerset to the crown were to be assigned to the dower of the new queen, and these included the cash he had received from the charroy, the transport tax he had levied in the Cotentin. According to the letter, Somerset had no right to make the imposition for

'... a l'occasion de laquelle lui feismes delivrer et paier en Angleterre tres grosse somme de deniers pour convertir et emploier en paiement des gens d'armes et de trait que lors mena oultre la mer avec lui. Et avec ce, pour ce que ne voulions grever ne chargier noz subgetz de nostre dicte duchie de Normandie ne de noz aultres pais de France a nous obeissans, lui feismes d'abondant delivrer en celui nostre royaume, avant son partement, une aultre grant somme de deniers pour paier charioz, charettes, pionniers, manouvriers et aultres gens a ce servans ... lesquelz il ne paia aucunement

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- (1) Writs were issued 12 June 1444 to sheriffs in the counties of Somerset and Dorset, Yorkshire, Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire. Inquisitions were to be taken of the late duke's goods and chattels, and writs of distraint issued against his executors, who were to be summoned to render the accounts of the expedition at the exchequer by the feast of St John the Baptist (24 June). Accounts outstanding included those for the payment of the first two quarters' wages and diverse sums for ordnance (PRO, E159/220, K.R., Brevia, Trinity; E202/126).
- (2) With the accounts for £800 of the second quarter's wages (paid to Thomas Gerard 26 July 1443) and £102 3s 4d for bows and arrows (paid to John Dawson 6 July 1443) still outstanding, sheriffs in Yorkshire seized the late duke's holding in the lordship of Cottingham. Held by the duke's executor and feoffee Thomas Everingham, it was valued at £5 a year. It was confiscated on 21 January 1445: PRO, E199 (Sheriff's Accounts)/50/48; E364/79 (Sheriff's Seizures).
- (3) A vidimus of this letter has been preserved in the records of the royal inquiry (AN, K68/19, ff.1-2) and is printed in Luce, op.cit., II, 189-91. However Luce inadvertently missed out an important section of the letter; his transcript also contains a number of minor inaccuracies.

du dit argent d'Angleterre, mais fist cueillir et lever sur noz subgiez de Normandie et autres partes deca la mer grosses sommes de deniers soubz ombre des diz charioz, charettes, macons, charpentiers, pionniers et manouvriers ...'.

Local officials in Normandy were instructed to record all the levies that had been made and communicate it to the exchequer as soon as possible. An information of all the various amounts was assembled from the vicomtés of Valognes, Carentan, St-Sauveur-Lendelin, Coutances, Avranches and Mortain; it revealed a total of 5,210 livres 5 sols 8 deniers tournois had been collected.⁽¹⁾ This thorough inquiry was organised by the bailli of the Cotentin Hugh Spencer, and had been completed by 26 April 1446.

The letter from the king referred to two distinct allowances. The first was the actual cash that had been handed over to Somerset for the construction and maintenance of his ordnance. The exact amount that had been allowed for the carriage of this is not clear. But for at least one item, the 'newe ordonnance', the council had made provision to Cherbourg but no further.⁽²⁾ The second was a rebate, to be deducted from the war profits from the campaign due to the king (the customary thirds and thirds of thirds) when the accounts were presented at the end of the expedition. This remission was to cover all extra expenses incurred during the campaign, and included the costs of carts and drivers as well as the employment of spies, messengers or carpenters and masons.⁽³⁾ In view of this allowance, the transport tax levied by Somerset was clearly irregular but it may have been prompted by a lack of immediate funds to

(1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 9, f.286.

(2) PPC, V, 256-8.

(3) PRO, E101/71/4/916.

hire the carts, since war profits could not be made use of until the army was actually operating in enemy territory.⁽¹⁾

One particular reference in the letter was not concerned with the charroy itself but with Somerset's employment of the army, and gave further indication of the proceedings being taken by the exchequer against the duke's executors in England. It mentioned the nature of Somerset's commission in France and then added:

'Si est advenu que sans notre congie et licence il retourna diceului voiage et fut son armee dissolute avant le temps de son endenture, a la quelle cause est tenu et obligie de nous rendre et restituer l'argent quil avait receu en angleterre avant sesdites partement.'⁽²⁾

The clause suggests that Somerset may well have disbanded his troops several weeks too early.⁽³⁾ Officers in Normandy were instructed to arrest all the late duke's goods and properties for the satisfaction of this debt.

These financial investigations corroborate the atmosphere of criticism and hostility described by the chroniclers towards Somerset's unfortunate expedition. There is little doubt that his wide-ranging powers and independent field of operations redounded badly against him. A more vigorous prosecution of the campaign and more tangible success had been hoped for; instead his conduct had appeared both ineffective and corrupt. The extremely hostile account of Thomas Basin indicates Somerset was as unpopular with the Norman government as he was with the English.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Suggested by E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 206-10, in her discussion of the tax and the inquiry.

(2) AN, K68/19, ff.1-2. This section was omitted by Luce.

(3) Taking the six months' service from the final date of muster (17 July 1443) the army should have disbanded circa 17 January. If Somerset had returned to England around the new year it does appear that the army dispersed prematurely.

(4) Basin, I, 280-4, made great play of the secrecy of the campaign and criticised Somerset for not co-operating more with the captains at Rouen.

However, substantial questions remain concerning the expedition. There are gaps in our knowledge of the sequence of events, and accounts of the course of the campaign, even from those in France at the time, were often confused and misrepresentative, with no one chronicler fully satisfactory. The expected new offensive under Charles VII himself had never materialised. French document material shows that the army was able to wage a series of successful chevauchées into enemy territory, burning and plundering in a manner advocated by Sir John Fastolf, who had served on Somerset's baronial council when the nature of the campaign was being discussed.⁽¹⁾ It is perhaps worth recalling that a number of contemporaries did not share the general attitude and felt that there was something of a tragedy in the duke's disgrace and subsequent death.⁽²⁾ But there can be no doubt that Somerset's insistence on his own personal area of command and the lack of co-operation with York was both unfortunate and ill-advised. In a wider sense his conduct of the campaign was clearly at fault. A crossing of the Loire and a more vigorous prosecution of the war had been expected by the English council and anticipated by the French themselves. Instead the new army had been used in a series of minor engagements in northern Anjou and Maine, and had provoked a serious incident with Brittany; all this at a time when Normandy had been in urgent need of reinforcements. Whether this merited his disgrace, and accusations of both incompetence and corruption, is far more questionable. The stigma attached to Somerset was to be symptomatic of a more general ill, the uncertainty and confusion surrounding the king's own direction of the war effort.

(1) McFarlane, 'The investment of Sir John Fastolf's profits of war', TRHS, VII (1957), 106, n.4.

(2) Bale, 117, mentioning his death, described him as a 'full worthy werreour'. In the poem 'On the mutability of worldly changes', in Kingsford, op.cit., 395-7, again mentioning the duke's death:

'The noble duke of Somersett, John,
Whom all Brytayne and also Normandye
Had in grett drede, and his enemyes euerichone
For his manhode, puissance and cheualrye,
When he was weddyd and in estate most hye

In best age right and as hys fortune was,
the bull to grounde hym cast cruellye,
That soone after he dyed, such was hys grace.'

It is not certain what the poet meant by the 'bull'. It is possible that it is an oblique reference to Richard duke of York, as the bull was the badge of his wife, Cecily Neville. See also E. Seaton, op.cit., 355-7.

CHAPTER FIVE EDMUND BEAUFORT, DUKE OF SOMERSET,
GOVERNOR OF NORMANDY, 1448-50

(i) The Background to Edmund Beaufort's Arrival in France in April 1448

Only a few months after the demise of John Beaufort's unfortunate expedition a new peace initiative was launched by the English government. A delegation led by Suffolk had left the country in February 1444; they were to meet Charles VII at Tours towards the end of April.⁽¹⁾ The main topic of discussion was the French offer of marriage of René of Anjou's daughter Margaret to Henry VI, and the details of this were concluded on 22 May 1444.⁽²⁾ The prospect of a major peace settlement did not materialise, though significantly the English side showed themselves prepared to abandon Henry's own claim to the French throne and for the first time Charles was not styled as the king's adversary. In return the English wanted Gascony and Normandy in full sovereignty but the French were only prepared to offer Gascony, neighbouring Quercy and Périgord and Calais and Guines, held in homage of Charles VII.⁽³⁾ The congress did however terminate with the signing of a general truce, to last twenty-one months, operative from 1 July 1444.⁽⁴⁾

A new embassy crossed over to France at the end of the year, again led by Suffolk, to collect Henry's new bride. At a meeting with the French king at Nancy in the spring of 1445 further details concerning the truce

(1) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 175-6.

(2) G. Du Fresne de Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII, 276-7.

(3) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 175, citing Stevenson, Letters and Papers, I, 131-3, 157.

(4) The terms of the truce are printed in Rymer, XI, 59-67.

were agreed.⁽¹⁾ Suffolk returned through Normandy with Margaret and crossed over to England on 9 April 1445.⁽²⁾ England and France now enjoyed a much needed respite from the war. The terms of the truce, set out at Tours and subsequently re-announced at each extension of the peace, did not disallow the maintenance of the garrisons or the upkeep of an army. But warlike acts, incursions by troops or the construction of new fortifications, were prohibited. To supervise these new conditions conservators of the truce were appointed from both sides to hear local complaints and to try breaches of conduct. Garrison captains were made responsible for controlling the movements of soldiers in their areas.⁽³⁾ However despite these arrangements no provision for a more long-term peace had been established. A new French embassy, in London in July 1445, produced little in this respect beyond a proposal for a personal meeting between the two kings on French soil sometime in 1446.⁽⁴⁾ Although Henry VI decided not to cross over himself it became his own personal wish that a longer and more secure peace be obtained. The prolongation of the truce, to 1 April 1447, was followed by a fresh initiative on Henry's part. In a secret letter to Charles on 22 December 1445 he promised the surrender of Maine in return for a twenty year truce.⁽⁵⁾ Although the king's closest councillors such as Suffolk and Adam Moleyns, may have been privy to the king's intentions, it seems that they were unknown to the majority of the council before the formal announcement of the surrender in July 1447.⁽⁶⁾

(1) These included compensation for the levying of the appatis (Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 18).

(2) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 182.

(3) Rymer, XI, 59-67.

(4) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 190-1.

(5) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 639-42.

(6) Ibid.

The result of the king's action caused much confusion and recrimination; the final evacuation of Maine in March 1448 took place after repeated delays and very evident opposition from the English concerned in the surrender.⁽¹⁾

In the meantime Richard duke of York's five-year commission as king's lieutenant-general and governor in France and Normandy had expired, and he had returned to England in the summer of 1445. He had faced criticism over finance and other details of his administration, but this was cleared and by July 1446 the council appeared to have decided on his reappointment.⁽²⁾ However a violent disagreement broke out between York and the keeper of the privy seal Adam Moleyns, over the investigations into his conduct, and this may well have alienated him from the government.⁽³⁾

A number of chronicle accounts attributed the failure of York to renew his term of command to the hostile influences of the Queen and Suffolk.⁽⁴⁾ Information on the proceedings of the council meetings at this time is scant, and concrete evidence confined to lists of those present during the autumn and winter of 1446. But these may give some indication of when the breach occurred. York's articles against Moleyns (unfortunately

(1) A full description of the sequence of events is given in R. Planchenault, 'La délivrance du Mans (Janvier-Mars 1448)', Revue Historique et Archéologique du Maine, LXXIX (1923), 185-202.

(2) R.L. Storey, The End of the House of Lancaster, 73, citing PPC, VI, 52-3.

(3) Ibid.

(4) A chapter of Waurin's Recueil des Croniques (Rolls Series, 1884), V, 348-54, is devoted to the circumstances by which York was replaced as lieutenant-general by Somerset. But it is a later insertion into the main body of the chronicle, and written some time after the accesssion of Edward IV, and is highly partisan. Another pro-Yorkist account is in Whethamstede, Registrum (Rolls Series, 1872), I, 159-60.

undated) accused him of being prepared to ship back soldiers from Normandy to testify against him.⁽¹⁾ Moleyns had been in France from July to November 1446, and was back in council on 14 December along with Kemp, Suffolk, Dudley, Reginald Bouchers the abbot of Gloucester, Cardinal Beaufort, Somerset and York himself.⁽²⁾ It seems plausible that the rift opened around this time as the decision to appoint Edmund Beaufort king's lieutenant-general and governor had been made by 24 December 1446.⁽³⁾

Unfortunately the actual indenture for Somerset's new commission does not survive. The warrant for payment of the first six weeks' wages for his army (26 December 1446) shows that it was sealed on 24 December.⁽⁴⁾ Somerset was to be appointed lieutenant-general for the shorter term of three years, starting from 1 March 1447. A force of 300 men-at-arms and 900 archers was to accompany him to France. At the date of indenture he was to receive six weeks' wages in hand.⁽⁵⁾ Another six weeks' were to be paid a month before the musters (to be held at Poole, Portsmouth and Southampton), the second quarter before the army embarked. Somerset was to receive an annual salary of £20,000 each year, but it was only to take effect if war broke out. All payments he received to cover soldiers' wages were to be deducted from this sum.⁽⁶⁾

(1) BL, Harley Ms. 543, ff.161-3.

(2) The attendance is taken from the warrant filed in PRO, E28/77. This question is discussed in L.E. James, 'The career and political influence of William de la Pole, first duke of Suffolk, 1437-50' (Oxford BLitt thesis, 1979), 166-7; also R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 505-7.

(3) PRO, E404/63/11.

(4) Ibid.

(5) In fact payment of this sum was delayed by two months. A fresh warrant for the six weeks' wages was sent to the exchequer 3 February 1447 (PRO, E404/63/19). The advance on the wages, £1,882 13s 9d, was issued under PRO, E403/765 (1 February 1447).

(6) These conditions were mentioned in the original warrant to the exchequer (PRO, E404/63/11) referring to the terms of the indenture.

This evidence suggests that Edmund was intended to cross over to Normandy around the summer of 1447. Although some troops were being recruited in May 1447 nothing further developed.⁽¹⁾ According to the chronicler Thomas Basin, there was considerable confusion in Normandy during this period, with proclamations being made first in favour of Somerset and then York.⁽²⁾ Since York's departure from the duchy in 1445 government had been carried out by the Norman council, and many documents issued in 1447 still referred to York as lieutenant-general, 'at present in England', even after he had been appointed king's lieutenant in Ireland.⁽³⁾ Evidently there was still much uncertainty in Normandy itself over the arrangements for the command, and it has been suggested that York's principal supporters may have been attempting some sort of action on his behalf.⁽⁴⁾

Preparations for the new expedition in England may well have been delayed by the arrest and subsequent death of Humphrey duke of Gloucester in February 1447. However the failure to despatch the new governor later in the year rested in the confused arrangements for the surrender of English-held Maine. This decision involved Somerset more than anyone else, since he was the military commander of the region and also held the land rights of the comté. Confirmation of the cession of Maine had been sealed, in the presence of French ambassadors, in a council meeting of 27 July 1447.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Protections were issued to William Peyto and John Bagot in the retinue of the Marquis of Dorset in May 1447 (Calendar of French Rolls, 372).

(2) Thomas Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, II, 64-66.

(3) Eg. BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5823 (14 October 1447). York's appointment was on 30 July 1447 (Johnson, thesis cit., 113, 115).

(4) E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 141-2, although the evidence cited is not conclusive.

(5) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 638-43.

Somerset was among the English lords in attendance. Delivery of the province was promised for 1 November 1447. On 28 July orders were sent to the captains Mathew Gough and Fulkes Eyton ordering them to receive Le Mans and other captaincies in Maine from Somerset or his lieutenants, and to deliver them to Charles VII.⁽¹⁾ However when the commissioners arrived before Osbert Mundeford, Edmund's lieutenant at Le Mans it became apparent that no letters of discharge had been received and Mundeford therefore did not have the proper authority to make the surrender.⁽²⁾ A sharp reaction followed from the king and council, meeting on 23 October 1447. Clearly Somerset had been expected to have arranged details of the formal discharge of his lieutenants. A mandate was sent to him with the reminder that he had been present at the formal declaration of the surrender of Maine and that the proposed handover to the French was being jeopardised.⁽³⁾ Further letters were sent to both Mundeford and Somerset's lieutenant at Mayenne, Richard Frogenhall, repeating that it was the king's express wish that the surrender took place, that their master had witnessed the ratification of this and warning of the consequences of any further disobedience.⁽⁴⁾

Since Somerset held both the office of king's governor in Maine and more importantly the title to the comté of Maine itself, the arrangements for his surrender of these grants were the essential prelude to the final

(1) Ibid., 696-702.

(2) Ibid., 704-10.

(3) Ibid., 702. The letter from king and council to Richard Frogenhall (not printed in Stevenson) is in BN, Ms. Fr. 4054, f.73 .

(4) All were despatched at the same council meeting of 23 October 1447.

transfer to the French. When Edmund had been granted the comté on 19 July 1442, it had been a reward for his good service in the wars in France and more particularly in his office of governor of Anjou and Maine, which he had held since 1438. But although the grant was for a term of life, it contained an important reservation concerning the king's own intentions in the future:

'... que se en faisant traitie de paix avecques notre adversaire de france nous voulons restituer ledit conte du Maine notredit cousin de dorset dessous nomme sera tenu soy en departir et de delaisser ce present don'. (1)

This clause had been brought into effect by Henry's wish to cede Maine to the French. The king had made an oral declaration to Somerset promising him compensation, Edmund submitting his own proposals as to how this might be best effected.⁽²⁾ In the circumstances he probably delayed sending formal letters of discharge to his lieutenants until his terms had been authorised by king and council. This finally took place in an important meeting of 13 November 1447 with Kemp, Suffolk, York, Buckingham and Cromwell among those in attendance.⁽³⁾ After recalling that Somerset held the comté of Maine, and the office of governor there, both for life, and that he had always done the king good service, the king's wish to surrender Maine in the interests of a lasting peace was reiterated. Then the formal resignation of both grants was declared:

(1) A vidimus of this important grant is in BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 3642 (Collections Bastard d'Estaing)/804.

(2) At a conference of English landowners at Le Mans, 31 October 1447, Dunois (one of the French ambassadors) announced that Somerset had already been promised compensation by his master (Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 687-92). Dunois had been present at the council meeting of 27 July 1447. The final agreement (see below) referred to this petition of Somerset's.

(3) A vidimus of the terms of compensation decided on in this council meeting is in BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5834.

'... A Icelui et a notre ordonnance et volente sur ce notredit cousin de dorset a Remis Resigne et delaisse en nos mains tout le droit que ^{par} vertu de nosdis dons Il avoit pouvoit et pretendroit en Icelui conte ensemble en toutes les villes chasteaulx et fortresses et ou gouvernement quil avoit depar nous esdis duchie et Conte pour en disposer a notre voulente. Moyennant que pour Recompensacion des choses dessusdites lui avons promis lui delivrer chacun an au terme de sa vie en notre pais et duchie de normendie la somme de dix mille livres tournois et de ce lui bailler pour la seurete de son paiment en notredit duchie assiette Raisonnable de laquelle Il nous a humblement supplie et Requis ...'

Details followed on how the sum was to be collected from the quatrième levied in the bailliages of Caen and Cotentin. It was evident that Somerset had been anxious to secure prior assignment for this income, and guarantees of payment in the event of any problems or delays in his receipt of his compensation. Moreover the actual amount negotiated, 10,000 livres tournois each year, was a very hard bargain that must have greatly exceeded the demesne revenue that could be expected from those parts of Maine in English hands.⁽¹⁾ Practical details concerning the management of the garrison troops forced to evacuate Maine were to be arranged on Edmund's arrival in Normandy.⁽²⁾

With the settlement of Somerset's claims the way was clear for him to take up his office. In Henry's eyes now that the surrender of Maine had been finally accomplished the road was also open for further negotiations with Charles concerning the prospects of a long-term peace. Edmund, as well as taking up the post of lieutenant-general, was to be commissioned as one of the king's principal ambassadors, along with Moleyns and Sir Richard Roos (who were already serving in France in that

(1) In 1433-4 the income from the demesne was 1,200 livres tournois and this figure would have dropped considerably by 1447 (Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 549).

(2) Somerset was to be assigned 6,000 livres tournois from the bailliages of Caen and the Cotentin to cover payment of the wages of garrison soldiers newly arrived from Maine (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.38^v).

capacity), the abbot of Gloucester and, interestingly, Osbert Mundeford (almost certainly nominated by Edmund himself).⁽¹⁾ A letter from Henry VI to Charles, 11 December 1447, announced the despatch of Somerset, who had been given full powers to negotiate an extension of the truce.⁽²⁾

Preparations commenced for the new governor's embarkation early in 1448 with recruitment for his retinue underway during January, February and March.⁽³⁾ Although the government had originally contracted for a force of 300 men-at-arms and 900 archers this was amended on 31 January 1448 to a contingent of 1,000 archers.⁽⁴⁾ The same arrangement for their payment was to apply, with the exchequer to supply the first six months' wages, to be deducted from Somerset's salary of £20,000 if and when war broke out.

However the situation in France was deteriorating rapidly. The royal commissioners Mathew Gough and Fulkes Eyton had in their turn delayed the surrender of Le Mans; Charles VII had responded by bringing an army up outside the city. Skirmishing with the English followed. This alarming news had reached the English council early in March, and caused additional troops to be assigned to Somerset's army:

(1) PRO, C76/130, m.6 (6 April 1448).

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 4054, f.63.

(3) Calendar of French Rolls, 376-7; Corporation of London, Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls 1437-57, ed. P. Jones (Cambridge, 1954), 106, 108.

(4) The first payment made to Edmund Beaufort, £2,666 13s 4d, (4,000 marks), was for general expenses for the safe-keeping of France and Normandy (other than shipping): PRO, E403/769 (5 December 1447). The warrant to the exchequer for the payment of the first quarter's wages was issued on 31 January 1448 (PRO, E404/64/117); the £2,275 was paid out just over a fortnight later (PRO, E403/769, 16 February 1448). Somerset loaned the money for the second quarter himself just before the army was due to embark: CPR, 1446-52, 130-1 (13 March 1448). The sum was assigned to him from the remains of the subsidy granted on the customs in 1446, on 30 May 1448 (PRO, E401 /806; A. Steel, The Receipt of the Exchequer, 230).

'... And now it is come to our knowledge that a grete power and a mighty siege is laide before oure towne of Maunce and sharp werre dayly made to oure subgetts being thereinne ye which is no signe of peas but a likelyhode to ye werre. We therefore by the advice of oure Counsaill have ordeined that oure said cousin shall have with hym ijc speres and ijm bowes ...' (1)

This new force was to be raised in addition to the 1,000 archers, and was intended to bring the expedition up to a wartime strength. However the crisis passed when Le Mans was at last surrendered and the English finally withdrew from Maine, upon which these reinforcements were cancelled (25 March 1448). (2)

No muster roll survives for the army that finally assembled at Portsmouth early in April. (3) Crossing with Somerset, who had been promoted to duke on 31 March, were the Lords Talbot and Fauconberg, along with such professional captains as Robert Vere, William Peyto, and James Standish. (4) At Rouen the castle was prepared for the arrival of the duke's family and household. (5)

The circumstances under which Somerset's army was being raised gave an ominous warning of the fragility of the truce. With the

(1) PRO, E404/64/137.

(2) PRO, E404/64/146. The first quarter's wages had already been paid out for this force of 200 men-at-arms and 2,000 archers: PRO, E403/769 (20 February 1448). Somerset was allowed to keep this money, again to be deducted from his salary if war broke out (£2,500).

(3) Commissioners for the muster of Beaufort's troops at Portsmouth were issued on 21 March 1448 (CPR, 1446-52, 140). 1,000 marks was provided for his shipping (PRO, E404/64/136, 5 March 1448). Benet's Chronicle, 194, gives the total strength of Somerset's retinue as 2,000 men.

(4) Both Talbot and Fauconberg were granted pensions of 2,000 livres tournois on their arrival in Normandy. Both grants mention that they had crossed over with Somerset and were payable from 1 April 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.39^v, 40). Other captains are mentioned in the lists of protections (Calendar of French Rolls, 376-7).

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5944.

arrival of Charles VII's troops outside Le Mans the outbreak of war had appeared imminent. Indeed at the end of February 1448 it had been announced in London that Edmund and his army were to be used against the French in Maine.⁽¹⁾ Although the resort to armed force had been narrowly averted by the final surrender of Le Mans in March 1448, relations between the two countries remained strained.

The circumstances of the appointment of the governor of France were seen by some chroniclers as the origin of the quarrel between York and Somerset. Yet relations between the two were maintained after Somerset's arrival in France.⁽²⁾ Evidence of a feud is not found even after the disastrous loss of Normandy and Edmund's return to England in August 1450. But York, in his articles of complaint in 1452, recalled, retrospectively, the occasion of Somerset's hard bargaining for compensation for the comté of Maine in 1447, compensation which Edmund seemed determined to procure before taking up his appointment:

'... and in especiall that he hath desired a recompense of your highness for the counte of Mayne for the delyverance thereof where it was specified in your letters patentes of your grant thereof to hym made that ye shuld be at your libertee to dispose it at your pleasure in case that ye for the meane of the pease wold do make a lyverey thereof unto youre uncle of Fraunce; and yit at the time of delyveraunce thereof he wold not agree thereto unto

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- (1) Corporation of London Records, Journals of the Common Council, Book 4, f.209: An announcement in a meeting of 26 February 1448 of the aggressions of Charles VII in Maine, and the king's despatch of the earl of Dorset to those parts. Charles had begun preparations for the siege of Le Mans by 5 January 1448; his army assembled outside the city in February (Archives Communales d'Angers, CC4, ff.46^v-48).
- (2) For example, a pursuivant sent by Somerset from Rouen to Dieppe to meet the men of the duke of York, waiting to carry news to the duke in England (14 January 1449): BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.130.

tyme that he were recompensid, as it is aforesaid,
in your Duchie of Normandie to a more value than his said
graunte drue to'. (1)

York himself had been present at the council meetings in which the surrender of Maine had been announced (27 July 1447), stern commands had been sent to Somerset and his lieutenants to effect the surrender without further delay (23 October), and the terms of Somerset's compensation for Maine finally decided upon (13 November). His complaint, albeit brought forward over four years later, offers further confirmation of Somerset's vigilant self-interest when matters concerning his own patrimony and estate were at issue, to the extent of defying the king's own wishes. It also confirmed that the annual grant Somerset finally obtained (10,000 livres tournois, to be levied from the quatrième, the tax on wine, cider, and other beverages, in the bailliages of Caen and the Cotentin) was far in excess of the yield of the royal demesne, to York an example of his rival's inordinate 'covetyse'.

(1) The Paston Letters, 1422-1509, ed. J. Gairdner (rev. ed., 1904, in six vols.), 1, 108. All future references to York's articles (103-8, op.cit.) will be made from the text in this particular edition.

(ii) The Sources for Edmund Beaufort's Governorship of Normandy, 1448-50

For the French, the events leading up to their declaration of war and the subsequent reconquest of Normandy were naturally of considerable historical importance. Both in terms of national pride and more specifically in enhancing the prestige of Charles VII, the rout of the English forces was of major propaganda value. Indeed for Charles the expulsion of the English, first from Normandy, and then from Gascony, and the defeat of their armies at Formigny and Castillon, was a remarkable personal triumph. Two men were commissioned each to provide a detailed chronicle of events leading to the recovery of Normandy. One, the royal herald 'Berry' had been in the service of Charles VII since 1436, and was already engaged on a life of the monarch. The other, Robert Blondel, had come to the king's notice with his Oratio historalis, an impassioned tirade against the English, completed after the re-opening of hostilities at the end of July 1449 but before the capture of Rouen at the end of October.⁽¹⁾ These works, particularly that of Blondel, provide a wealth of information, diplomatic and military, from the seizure of Fougères in March 1449 to the final surrender of Cherbourg in August 1450.⁽²⁾ Amongst the other chronicles of the reign of Charles VII that of Thomas Basin is particularly interesting in that the bishop had been employed on several occasions by the English administration in Normandy. After arranging the surrender of Lisieux to the French in August 1449 he gave important counsel to Charles' generals over the strategy they should adopt against the English position.⁽³⁾

(1) Oeuvres de Robert Blondel, A. Héron (Rouen, 1893), II, xxii-xxiv. All further references to this chronicle from be from this edition.

(2) Both were published by J. Stevenson, Narratives of the expulsion of the English from Normandy, 1449-50 (Rolls Series, XXXII, 1863).

(3) Thomas Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, ed. C. Samaran (Paris, 1933-44, in 2 vols.), II, 96-104 (account of the surrender of Lisieux), 104-111 (Basin's advice to the French captains on the continuation of the war). All future references to Basin's chronicle will be from this edition.

On another level information concerning the final breakdown of relations with England was extremely important to the French. They had after all decided to break the truce and declare war and it was necessary that this act could properly be demonstrated justifiable. The result was the assembling of a wealth of diplomatic material relative to the truce. Along with copies of the correspondence between the two sides and the details of various conferences, was more particular information concerning the dramatic seizure of Fougères by the English.⁽¹⁾ It had been collected by the French chancellor, Guillaume Jouvénal des Ursins, and it was significant that soon after the recapture of Rouen he was to preside over a full inquiry into the sack of the town, interrogating many who had served in the English administration.⁽²⁾

These records from the French side form a valuable and informative source, and were drawn on extensively by Stevenson in his important editions for the Rolls Series, Letters and papers illustrative of the wars of the English in France during the reign of Henry VI. Stevenson also made use of English government material where it was relevant, though this was limited to records of payments for troops and supplies being sent to the aid of Normandy.⁽³⁾ But the principal English source, much of it again used by Stevenson, for both the surrender of Maine and the loss of Normandy, was not an official record but the private

(1) These pieces are to be found in BN, Ms. Fr. 4054. They include a copy of the letter of disavowal from Francois Surienne to Henry VI (printed in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, I, 279-94). This may have been part of a testimony delivered by Surienne to the French government: A. Bossuat, Perrinet Gressart et François de Surienne, agents de l'Angleterre. Contribution à l'étude des relations de l'Angleterre et de la Bourgogne avec la France sous le règne de Charles VII (Paris, 1936), 349, n.3.

(2) Histoire des règnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI, par Thomas Basin, ed. J. Quicherat (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1855-9), iv, prints the complete text of the inquiry.

(3) The documents are for the most part warrants from council (PRO, E28) and warrants for issue (PRO, E404).

collection of William of Worcester, former secretary and servant of the old war veteran, Sir John Fastolf.⁽¹⁾

These documents also provide a rich source of information. Fastolf had been an important member of the Regent John duke of Bedford's administration in both Normandy and Maine and his papers give many details concerning incomes and valuations of lands, garrisons, provisions and ordnance.⁽²⁾ Although Fastolf's active war service had ended by the time of Bedford's death in 1435, he still maintained a lively interest in the management of his French lands. Moreover his experience was used to good effect, both in serving on the baronial councils of such prominent members of the nobility as Humphrey duke of Gloucester, Richard duke of York and John Beaufort duke of Somerset, as well as submitting memoranda to the English council itself.⁽³⁾ By the time of Edmund Beaufort's governorship he was still active in this respect, delivering articles of advice for Somerset himself, on the occasion of his embarkation for Normandy (30 March 1448), and to the council on the conduct of the war

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- (1) The material Stevenson drew on is found in Lambeth Palace Library, Ms. 506 (a late fifteenth century book, dedicated to Edward IV, probably before his campaign in France in 1475) and the College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 48 (a bound collection of papers in different hands). The career of William of Worcester is discussed by K.B. McFarlane in 'William of Worcester, a preliminary survey', in Studies presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson, ed. J.C. Davies (1957), 196-221.
 - (2) Including an account of the income of Maine 1433-44, a complete list of artillery and ordnance kept at Rouen and a valuation of Bedford's comté of Harcourt (Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 549-50, 553-4, 565-74).
 - (3) K.B. McFarlane, 'The investment of Sir John Fastolf's profits of war', TRHS, 5th series, VII (1957), 81-116. McFarlane drew upon an additional source, the Fastolf papers kept at Magdalene College, Oxford, which provided details of Fastolf's services on a number of baronial councils (ibid., 106, n.4).

that had reopened with France in 1449.⁽¹⁾ However the question remains, certainly by this period, whether Fastolf had any real influence in policy making. For example, in August 1449, just after the French declaration of war and opening campaign in eastern Normandy, he submitted twenty-seven propositions concerning the recovery of English possessions in France.⁽²⁾ Considering the violation of the truce by the French, Fastolf suggested the provision of some 40,000 men (30,000 for Normandy, the rest for Gascony) for which he estimated £140,000 would be needed!⁽³⁾ These rather ludicrous figures suggest a man who was now out of touch with the realities of the situation.

(1) The instructions to Somerset (30 March 1448) are printed in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 592-4. The articles stressed the importance of keeping the ports of Cherbourg, Honfleur and Harfleur secure, to strengthen the frontiers and keep the garrisons well-equipped and to provide a fair and just administration of the duchy. In the preface to the book (in the form of a dedication), written somewhat later than the actual contents themselves, it adds: 'Also yn this codycelle us made mencyon of certeyn articles brefly drawen the oppynyons of certeyn justifications for the werre to the noble prince Edmonde duc of Somerset When he toke the charge to be the kynges lieutenant for to protecte the Realme of france and ducdom of Normandy. Whiche and the seid articles had been provided fore and observed by the said duc the contreys castelles fortresses and cites had not by lyklynnesse be loste so sone' (Lambeth Ms. 506, f.6^v). Fastolf submitted further articles to the council concerning the need for a relief army after Somerset's retreat to Caen in 1450, 'beyng then of the kyngs grete councelle yn England': Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 595-7. Inserted above both instructions are retrospective criticisms, in a later hand, of the conduct of Somerset and Sir Thomas Kyriell, captain of the relief army (Lambeth Ms. 506, f.47^v, 49).

(2) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 723-38.

(3) Ibid. The force was to consist of 39,000 archers and 1,000 men-at-arms. Since parliament had made no allocations for a new army these figures were totally unrealistic.

However the real value of the collection for this later period lies in the large amount of additional information collected on both the surrender of Maine and loss of Normandy. The dramatic collapse of English fortunes, which had resulted in the loss of all Fastolf's French lands, had left him, like so many others, angry and embittered by what he regarded as a criminal mismanagement of the war effort. His principal grievance was against Somerset, and in a list of questions Fastolf had submitted to the council the duke was accused of treasonable misconduct.⁽¹⁾ But in a more general 'Advertissement' prepared some time after the loss of Caen, he called for a full inquiry into the surrender of towns and castles in both Normandy and Maine.⁽²⁾ Indeed it was Fastolf's own suspicion of the conduct of captains in both Normandy and Maine and his belief that a better defence of the English possessions could have been made that led him to draw up his own body of information on the matter. Fastolf was an assiduous collector, compiling copies of the government mandates and letters concerning the cession of Maine, the terms of surrender of such Norman towns as Rouen, Bayeux and Falaise, and a large list of towns and fortresses lost to the French during the governorship of Somerset.⁽³⁾

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- (1) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 718-722. Fastolf criticised the duke in a list of items, though one, an attack on Somerset's decision to refortify border castles in south-west Normandy (eg. Pontorson), had been advocated by Fastolf himself a year earlier.
- (2) College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 48, ff.324-5. The 'Advertissement' (not printed by Stevenson) began with an appeal for a constable of the realm to be appointed 'not sclaundered with the vice of covetise' (almost certainly a reference to Somerset who had been made constable of England on 11 September 1450, just over a month after his return from France: Rymer, XI, 276). It then called for an inquiry into the surrender of castles in Normandy and the authority for the surrender of towns in Maine.
- (3) The list of towns and castles lost in Normandy (drawn up under the direction of Fastolf) is interspersed by additions in a later hand concerning the fate of individual captains: College of Arms, Arundel Ms. 48, f.286.

The survival of this collection provides an important and often unique source for the final stages of the war. But despite its obvious value, one major proviso has to be made. It is not an official body of records, surviving either fully or partially intact. Rather it is a private collection, albeit with many copies from official documents, and when comparison can be made with an existing original, errors and inaccuracies are occasionally revealed.⁽¹⁾ Moreover the information collected is retrospective and selective, almost certainly as an aid in an attempt to initiate some sort of judicial proceedings against both Somerset and other captains in Normandy. It is strongly coloured by the atmosphere of bitterness and recrimination that was so characteristic of the years following the loss of all England's French possessions except Calais.⁽²⁾

In contrast to this material from the French and English sides, which has been well used, the records of the administration in Normandy itself have largely been neglected. This is not due to lack of evidence, indeed the period 1448-9 is probably better documented than any since Bedford's death in 1435, due to the survival of the receiver-general's account

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- (1) The copy of the terms of surrender of Rouen (printed in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 608-18) can be compared with a copy that had been kept by the French government, BN, Ms. Fr. 4054, f.158, printed in Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, ed. G. du Fresne de Beaucourt (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1863-4), III, 358-64. A number of slips have been made in the copy in Worcester's collection including the omission of two of the articles.
- (2) Despite widespread popular feeling the government refused to carry out any sort of inquiry into the loss of Normandy. Henry VI reaffirmed his confidence in Somerset and the only judicial action was taken against soldiers and captains guilty of misconduct on the English side of the Channel. Proceedings were begun against the captain Cuthbert Colville on his return from Normandy for the part played by him in the murder of Adam Moleyns: Marshall, thesis cit., 149, citing PRO, King's Bench Ancient Indictments (KB9/109, m.25). Action was also taken against unruly soldiers who had returned with Somerset's army in August 1450.

book for the year.⁽¹⁾ These accounts, which list all the payments charged to the duchy's revenue, only survive for three other years, the last being 1428-9.⁽²⁾ In this case the book is not complete, but its very existence is due to the efforts of the French who, arriving in Rouen in November 1449, preserved and copied up the records themselves. This may have been done as part of the general inquiry concerning the capture of Fougères, or, more probably, to maintain continuity of government.⁽³⁾ This source can be supplemented by papers, both originals and transcripts, from the remnants of the Norman offices of finance.⁽⁴⁾ The result is a reasonably comprehensive record of events up to the fall of Rouen and the loss of the Norman Chambre des Comptes in November 1449, with some further documents surviving from the 'skeleton' administration set up by Somerset in Caen early in 1450 during the last few months of the occupation.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) BL, Add. Ms. 11509. Unfortunately a substantial part of the book is missing. The first surviving page corresponds to f.215 of the original pagination.
 - (2) B.J. Rowe, 'The estates of Normandy under the duke of Bedford', EHR, XLVI (1931), 552. Rowe cites the three surviving account books of Pierre Surreau as receiver-general, 1423-5, a smaller book 1424-5 and 1428-9.
 - (3) The use of the accounts to ascertain the role of the English in the capture of Fougères was suggested by Bossuat, Francois de Surienne, 347. In the negotiations over the surrender of Rouen the English had been prepared to return all the Norman Chambre des Comptes material: A. Pottier, 'Réduction de la ville de Rouen en 1449', Revue Rétrospective Normande (Rouen 1842), 11. This was of course important to the French in purely administrative terms, since they would wish to make their own assignments on the aide which had been granted by the estates in May 1449: Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III, 391 (an extract from the French accounts of 1450 showing assignments made from the receipt of officers who had served under the English).
 - (4) The most important body of original documents is the collection of 'Quittances, mandements et pièces diverses' in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Fr. 26077, 26078 and 26079. The principal source from later transcripts is the Collection Dom Lenoir, particularly 28, 74.
 - (5) After the loss of the Norman Chambre des Comptes Somerset had to check officials' accounts himself: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.261 (Somerset supervising the account of Thomas Pellevé, vicomte of Caen, 12 May 1450).

An additional source exists in the municipal and ecclesiastical records that survive for the period. The town records for Mantes, in the Norman Vexin, are particularly useful as the financial accounts and the proceedings of the local assembly are reasonably intact. Other, more piecemeal collections, survive at Rouen and Lisieux.⁽¹⁾ The book of the cathedral chapter at Rouen is also extant, and provides further information on the last years of the occupation.⁽²⁾

(1) The records for Mantes, on the Norman Vexin, are particularly good with both the accounts of the town (Series CC) and the deliberations of the local assembly (Series BB) surviving for most of the period of the English occupation. There is considerable detail on the visit of Somerset to the town in August 1448, and the surrender to the French in August 1449: Archives Communales de Mantes, BB 5 (Délibérations municipales 1448-56), CC 28 (Comptes de la ville 1447-8). The town accounts of Lisieux survive for a number of years of the English occupation. The contents of each individual register were carefully listed in a hand-written inventory by the archivist of Calvados, A. Bénet, Les comptes de la ville de Lisieux pendant l'occupation Anglaise, 1423-49 (1902). Sadly the two registers for the period 1448-9 have gone missing since, leaving the detailed inventory the only guide to their contents. Again there is a reception for Somerset, passing through the town and detail on the surrender of the town in 1449. The accounts for Rouen no longer exist, but the records for the meeting of the local assembly, missing for most of the English occupation, survive for the period 1448-9 and again are particularly useful on the surrender of the town in October 1449: Archives Communales de Rouen, A 7 (Registres de Délibérations 1447-53). Unfortunately no such material has survived for Caen.

(2) ADSM, G 2131.

(iii) Civil government: the administration of Normandy 1448-9

After landing at Cherbourg, Somerset and his retinue travelled on to Caen, and then to Rouen (which he had reached by 22 April) where he installed himself as new lieutenant-general.⁽¹⁾ The duke's wife and children, his large household and principal captains were lodged in the castle at Rouen.⁽²⁾ After an interval of nearly three years, during which Normandy had been administered by the Grand Conseil, there was now a new governor in the province. For his salary Beaufort drew on a peace-time allowance of 30,000 livres tournois each year. Charged on the revenues of the Norman treasury it was to be paid quarterly to Somerset himself or to the treasurer of his household. This pension had been made payable from 30 September 1447, and the duke had already collected 15,000 livres tournois before he left for France.⁽³⁾

Despite the truce, serious problems had been growing in the duchy. Many of these concerned the misconduct of English soldiers, both unruly garrison troops and those living off the countryside. The inhabitants of the vicomté of Coutances, hearing of Somerset's arrival, sent a delegation to Rouen to complain that the extortions of 'gens vivans

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- (1) Thomas Basin, in Normandy at the time, described the duke's arrival (Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, II, 66-7). Somerset was in Rouen by 22 April 1448, when he sent a letter to Charles VII concerning the English embassy (BN, Ms. Fr. 4054, f.97). Three days later he had an interview with Philip de la Rose, treasurer of the chapter of the cathedral at Rouen, probably concerning the special service and reception to be held in honour of the new governor (ADSM, G 2131, f.184).
- (2) Throughout the summer minor alterations were being made to the rooms of the duchess, the master of the duke's kitchens, his ushers and chamberlains. Other captains lodged in the castle included Talbot and John Hanford (BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/5967).
- (3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.38 (receipts for 24 January 1448, 4 April, 1 July). This was in contrast to the annual pensions of Talbot and Fauconberg (each 2,000 livres tournois) which commenced 1 April 1448, the date they actually crossed over to France: Ibid., ff.39^v, 40. The pension, the 'estate', was the same value as that held by Warwick as lieutenant-general 1437-9, but 6,000 l.t. less than that awarded to York for his second term (1441-5): Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 587.

sur le pays' had left the people 'en voye de totale destruccion':

'... Et depuis par iceulx manans et habitans de ladite viconte, ayans cognoissance de ladicte descente et joyeux advenement de notredit cousin et lieutenant, eussent iceulx suplians este de rechief esleus et chargiez pour tourner pardevers icelui nostre cousin et lieutenant pour lui remonstrer les dictes charges et oppressions du dit peupple, afin de obtenir la dicte provision sur ce ...' (1)

These difficulties were often worsened by the proximity of French garrisons, in this case at Granville and Mont-St-Michel, who were still making sporadic plundering raids into the surrounding countryside.

The complaints from the civilian population about the conduct of English troops centred on two distinct problems, both of which had worsened since the death of Bedford. The first involved those soldiers, remnants from previous expeditions from England, garrisons from castles that had been lost to the French, or deserters, who were now outside the normal supervision of the administration. These men often took to living off the countryside in the worst sense, robbing and pillaging. Some had been shipped back to England 1445, but the situation was exacerbated by the arrival of a new influx after the surrender of Maine. Apart from the wholesale return of these soldiers to England, or employing them to fight in a foreign country, the only short-term action was to recruit a number of these men into crues for the regular garrisons and to punish the more notorious malefactors.

Responsibility for the assembly of these 'gens vivans sur le pays' was usually delegated to the local bailli. He and his sergeants would

(1) AN, K68/29/5.

make proclamations throughout the surrounding area for the men to gather at muster points on a certain day, when they would then be incorporated into a field force or a garrison. In bad cases, where brigandage and robbery were involved, the local captain would be ordered to arrest and imprison them. Somerset had recourse to both these methods, just as his predecessors had. A letter of the duke was sent to the bailli of Caux at Harfleur with instructions 'pour faire deslogier certaines gens de guerre qui este vivans sur le pais et les contraindre aller en les garnisons', while the captains of Orbec and Exmes received orders 'pour prendre et apprehendre certaines larrons et agresseurs des chemins'.⁽¹⁾ Such examples were common, and Somerset seems to have taken a strong personal interest in the suppression of robbery and other such violence. Leaders of brigands were often brought before the duke himself, as when Hugh Standish led from Bernay to Rouen Vincent of Vernon and other larrons he and his company had captured.⁽²⁾ Somerset frequently instructed crues to be formed to supplement garrisons; on his arrival at Caen for example, he established such a force and personally guaranteed the payment of its wages.⁽³⁾ The problem however ran deeper than such individual actions, and reflected the fundamental failure of Henry V's policy of settlement in the duchy providing for its basic defence.⁽⁴⁾

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6033.

(2) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.139. Bedford himself had had partial success against these plundering bands. But after his death and English military reversals soldiers crowded back into the duchy and took to organised pillage on a large scale: B. Rowe, 'Discipline in the Norman garrisons under Bedford, 1422-35', EHR, XLVI (1931), 196. A captured brigand was taken to a royal prison where a judgment was made (death or imprisonment) and then the captor received his reward: R. Jouet, La résistance à l'occupation anglaise en Basse-Normandie (1418-50) (Caen, 1969), 44.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6029.

(4) A. Curry, 'Military organisation in Lancastrian Normandy', 199-200.

The second area of civilian complaint concerned the regular garrisons of Normandy, who often took to making levies and demands on local people when their wages fell into arrears. This was a serious problem, and seems to have worsened under Edmund's governorship. Indeed York was able to play upon a widespread popular belief that Somerset himself had unlawfully withheld soldiers' money for his own profit.⁽¹⁾ However these difficulties were not a reflection of an individual so much as the administrative and fiscal system itself, in particular the practice of assignment. Instead of receiving cash payments direct from the treasury, garrisons were often assigned their wages from the receipt of the local receiver, usually charged on the proceeds of the aide that had been granted by the Norman estates.

While such a procedure might suit the purposes of the Norman treasury it could often lead to long delays before wages were fully paid, either because of a shortfall in the amount collected or a prior assignment elsewhere. The problem was usually worse where large garrisons were concerned. Surviving receivers' accounts for south-west Normandy show that large sums were continually owed to the lieutenant at Avranches from

(1) The introduction to the Paston Letters contains a transcript of these articles York brought against Somerset. He had accused his rival of '... not paiying duely nor contentyng such sourdiours as abode upon the defences...' (The Paston Letters, I, 105). In this York was able to play upon popular opinion. '... Others say that the Duke of Somerset, for his awne peculiar profite kept not halfe his number of Souldiors and put their wages in his purse': Hall's Chronicle, 216. This was also reflected in the Norman Chronicles, one describing Somerset's governorship thus: 'Anglois furent mal payes, par query furent plus abandonnez a prendre et bretonner sur le peuple': A. Hellot, Les Croniques de Normandie (Rouen, 1881), 82.

1437 until the end of the war, the situation growing so bad that at one stage the lieutenant had to arrest the receiver of Avranches and Mortain and forcibly extract money from him.⁽¹⁾

When soldiers were faced with non-payment they usually made their own unlawful taxes, appatis, on the surrounding area, which were much resented by the local inhabitants. These unauthorised levies had been a considerable problem under York's lieutenancy but he was not slow to make political capital out of them in his charges against Somerset.⁽²⁾ The situation may have worsened during Edmund's governorship, but the evidence from the surviving receiver-general's account shows that for the most part soldiers' wages were still being regularly paid and the assignment system itself does not seem to have really broken down until the second month of the war (August-September 1449).⁽³⁾ The best the governor himself could do was to keep a check against corruption and malpractice by local officials and this Somerset made considerable efforts to do.

The arrival of a new governor would always signal changes in the personnel of administration, the introduction of new men. York was later to claim that Somerset's actions were excessive in this respect, depriving many experienced men of their posts.⁽⁴⁾ In fact on the level

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- (1) E.M. Burney, 'The English Rule in Normandy', 202-3, citing extracts from the receiver's account for south-west Normandy in BL, Birch Ms. 4101.
- (2) At Arques on the northern border, arrears of 950 livres tournois were claimed by the captain in April 1445 (Burney, thesis cit., 201).
- (3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.95-98. A short-term measure in the case of outstanding arrears was for the treasurer to make a loan to the captain to cover the immediate needs of his troops until proper payment came through, eg. Osbert Mundeford forwarding 200 livres tournois to Makyn Longworth, captain of Tombelaine, to enable him to purchase provisions for his men (24 March 1449): BL, Birch Ms. 4101, ff.44-44^v.
- (4) The Paston Letters, I, 104.

of central government there was relatively little change.

The most important introductions to Somerset's government concerned two of the principal officers from his old administration in Maine. Due to the old age and illness of the Norman treasurer John Stanlawe, Osbert Mundeford (who had been Somerset's bailli and captain at Le Mans and captain of Beaumont-sur-Sarthe) was appointed in June 1448 as an assistant to aid him with his duties.⁽¹⁾ On Stanlawe's death two months later, Mundeford took over the office.⁽²⁾ He was to become one of the most vigorous and prominent members of the new administration. As well as serving as the new treasurer this soldier-administrator was to be employed on numerous important diplomatic and military assignments. His new post marked a thorough supervision of the machinery of tax-collection in the duchy. Where incomes were producing substantial deficits new measures were taken to check the methods of collection (one of his first acts as treasurer was the appointment of an official to supervise the collection of the quatrième, the tax on wine, beer, cider and other beverages, in the bailliage of Rouen). A constant watch was kept on the activities of local receivers.⁽³⁾

This more vigilant regime was the response of both Somerset and Mundeford to complaints about corruption and peculation among certain officers. One group particularly singled out were the élus, the numerous

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- (1) At the request of John Stanlawe, 'hors d'etat pour cause d'infirmitie et maladie de pouvoir vacquer seul audit office', Mundeford was appointed assistant treasurer with annual wages of 500 livres tournois (9 June 1448): AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.237.
- (2) On 9 September 1448, with wages of 750 livres tournois each year (ibid.).
- (3) Mundeford appointed Estienne de Vaux 'controller' of the quatrième in the bailliage of Rouen to investigate losses due to fraud and dishonesty in the collection of the tax (7 September 1448): ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.67.

group responsible for the collection of the aides granted by the Norman estates. It was difficult to keep a check on the activities of these men, and this had proved to be one of the weaknesses of the fiscal system. It was here that the new government introduced one of its most far-reaching administrative reforms, abolishing the office of élus altogether; their functions were to be taken over by the vicomtes of each bailliage.⁽¹⁾ This brought tax-collection under the aegis of more reliable royal officers, whose accounts were subject to regular scrutiny by the Norman treasury.

With a limited peace-time revenue granted by the Norman estates, priorities had to be made in the matter of assignment. Preference was given to those involved in the civil or military administration of the duchy.⁽²⁾ However, in order to supplement this income Somerset undertook the controversial measure of redirecting the money collected from the appatis, intended to compensate those who had lost land through the surrender of Maine, for the general use of the treasury. Sir John Fastolf, an important landowner in Maine, was to make the accusation that Somerset had appropriated this money, granted by Charles VII:

'... let the said Somerset be asked what money he has given to the gentlemen and others who were in the comté of Maine, for the compensation which they ought to have;

(1) On the role of the élus in French financial administration see G. Dupont-Ferrier, Études sur les Institutions Financières de la France à la fin du Moyen Age (Paris, 1930-2, 2 vols), I, 62-90. Somerset had abolished the office of 'élus sur le fait des aides' for the whole of Normandy with the exception of the towns of Rouen and Caen, 12 March 1449 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir 104 mi 74, f.211). This drastic measure left a wake of individual hardship. John d'Abercourt, formerly an élu at Gisors, petitioned the government that since his dismissal he had fallen into debt and was unable to support his wife and children (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.30^v).

(2) ADC, F (Fonds Danquin) 1324; BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.101^v-102.

which money was given to him to be by him given to the said gentlemen, of which he has given none, but applied it to his own private advantage.' (1)

The arrangement referred to by Fastolf was the agreement of Charles VII at the treaty of Lavardin (11 March 1448) to remit his right to the appatis collected in Normandy and delivered to the French each quarter as part of the terms of the truce.⁽²⁾ This remission was evaluated at 24,000 livres tournois (a year's revenue from the appatis) and was intended to recompense the English landowners in Maine. However the entries on the receiver-general's account for Normandy 1448-9 reveal that the income in fact received prior assignment elsewhere. Indeed only one payment can be traced that provided this compensation, a sum of 3,000 livres tournois to John viscount Beaumont for his barony of Mayenne, and this was on the intercession of the Queen Margaret of Anjou.⁽³⁾ The rest was used for other purposes and absorbed into the general expenditure of the duchy. Although this body of evidence disproves the allegation that Somerset had pocketed the money himself the bitterness of those like Fastolf who had lost

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- (1) Printed and translated from the original French copy in William of Worcester's collection in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 722. One of York's articles made a similar reference: '... he resceyved and had at the delyverey of Anjoy and Mayn 72,000 frankes or there aboutes, which were graunted and ordeyned to the Englisshmen havynge theire lyvelode at the said delyveraunce, and wold not disperse the same money ... but kepith it still to his own use and singuler availe, notwithstanding that he was recompensid for his lyvelode in that cuntrey in youre Duchie of Normandye of a more value than the gift thereof was worth, which causith the said Englisshmen to be here in grete povertie;': The Paston Letters, I, 107.
- (2) Rymer, XI, 203-4.
- (3) BL, Add. Ms., 11509, ff.21^v-22. 3,000 livres tournois to be paid to Beaumont from the income from the appatis. This was in response to a letter on his behalf sent by Margaret of Anjou to Somerset: Letters of Queen Margaret of Anjou and Bishop Beckington and others, written in the reigns of Henry V and Henry VI, ed. C. Munro (Camden Society, LXXXVI, 1863), 119. Other less influential landowners were not so fortunate.

property in Maine is understandable, especially in the light of the scrupulous arrangements Edmund had made for his own substantial compensation of 10,000 livres tournois each year.⁽¹⁾

Another important post was taken up by Pierre Samsot, who had been the duke's treasurer and receiver-general in Maine. In June 1448 Somerset appointed him receiver of the royal demesne, the grant being partially as compensation for the lands he had lost in Maine on its surrender to the French.⁽²⁾ The experienced administrator Pierre Bailli remained receiver-general, and for the most part Somerset was content to retain the men that had run the duchy over the last three years. Thomas Hoo remained chancellor, while clergy such as the archbishop of Rouen, the bishops of Avranches, Bayeux and Lisieux, continued to be actively involved on the Grand Conseil and affairs of government in general.⁽³⁾ Similarly the composition of the court of the council was to undergo little change.⁽⁴⁾ The most significant new member of the council was Reginald Boulers, abbot of Gloucester, who had been closely associated with Somerset and was a member of important delegations sent to England in November 1448 and May 1449.⁽⁵⁾ Boulers, along with the

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- (1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5834. The grant of an annual annuity of 10,000 livres tournois was for life. Somerset had petitioned that the sum be assigned directly from a tax in the duchy for the greater security of payment. He was empowered to take legal action against the receivers of the quatrième (the tax on beer, cider, wine and other beverages) if there was any delay in the delivery of the amount assigned. If for any reason the full 10,000 livres tournois was not met from the quatrième the Norman treasury was then liable to make up the deficit. The receiver-general's account reveals that the payments of this sum only broke down two months after the outbreak of war, in September 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.94, 96^V).
- (2) He was appointed on 17 June 1448 (BN, Ms. Fr. 23189, f.72).
- (3) Eg. the bishop of Avranches, receiving 600 livres tournois each year for attending the Grand Conseil (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.14). For the continuing role of the clergy in the administration, see C.T. Allmand, thesis cit., 143-4.
- (4) Burney, thesis cit., 38-40.
- (5) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.55^V.

the chancellor, frequently accompanied the governor on his visits to other parts of Normandy. More minor appointments were made to men who had done Somerset good service, but there was nothing on the scale of York's own efforts to introduce his men into the Norman administration on his arrival as lieutenant-general in 1441.⁽¹⁾

To the local inhabitants of Normandy the governor was a distant figure, rarely seen beyond the major cities of Rouen and Caen. When he appeared in public, on a ceremonial occasion or a visit to a town, he would be accompanied by a large retinue, his own household, government officials and military captains. This would present a magnificent spectacle, as when the governor and his entourage visited Mantes at the end of August 1448.⁽²⁾ The sighting of the party's barges up-river was signalled by ringing the great town bell, whereupon crowds of townspeople descended to the quayside. A day of festivities commenced, with a mystery play performed for the governor and presentations and gifts of wine made to Somerset, Talbot, the chancellor Thomas Hoo and the abbot of Gloucester.⁽³⁾ In the absence of Somerset and other members of government from Rouen routine matters were still dealt with by the Grand Conseil, though it was frequently necessary to refer them to the duke or his officials, wherever

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- (1) York's nominations for the council in Normandy, at the time of his appointment as governor in 1440, included viscount Beaumont, Lords Hungerford and Fanhope, Sir John Stourton, Sir John Popham and Sir Ralph Boteler (Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 586).
- (2) Somerset and his party had arrived 26 August 1448: Archives Communales de Mantes, BB 5 (Délibérations Municipales 1448-56), f.4^v.
- (3) The accounts of the town for the reception of Somerset and his company list the payments, including one to a man 'pour avoir sonne au Carrillon quant ledit gouverner arriva a Mantes'. They left for Vernon four days later. The town made presentations to Somerset of wine, and some ceremonial trumpets, and a loan to Talbot and Thomas Hoo from the treasury of the church: Archives Communales de Mantes, CC 28 (Comptes de la ville 1447-1448). For similar gifts offered to the governor, Talbot and other officers on a visit to Lisieux earlier in August 1448 see A. Bénet, Les comptes de la ville de Lisieux, 176, citing Register 24 (the accounts of the town 1448-9).

they were. For example, in September 1448 a clerk had to be sent from Rouen first to Vernon and then to Pont-de-l'Arche with a vidimus of letters patent which needed to be seen by the French secretary Michael le Paris, then travelling with Somerset.⁽¹⁾

Many of the duke's household were prominent figures in the duchy in their own right. One was Somerset's chamberlain Richard Frogenhall, bailli and captain of Harcourt, a man close enough to the governor for the citizens of Lisieux to find it politic to accord him a special reception when he passed through the town in February 1449.⁽²⁾ Also in attendance on the governor were a number of captains and their retinues. They operated in shifts, serving garrison duty and then around Somerset personally. His kinsman John Bastard of Somerset was stationed at Sées for six months (October 1448 - March 1449) before 'serving about the person of the duke of Somerset'.⁽³⁾ Thomas Kathersby, who had been in the governor's retinue for the previous six months, was sent on to Pont-Audemer.⁽⁴⁾ The duke was also accompanied by secretaries, heralds and a number of messengers, constantly being dispatched with his instructions for garrisons or towns.

If for most townspeople the governor was to be seen rarely, for the citizens of Rouen, where he and his entourage were based, public appearances were more frequent. A special service was held at the

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6010.

(2) A. Bénet, op.cit., 178.

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.9^v, 10^v.

(4) Ibid., ff.4, 5^v.

cathedral on 8 May 1448, to welcome Somerset as new lieutenant-general. Memorials of Charles V and Bedford were uncovered as a mark of honour for the new governor, who received a special address by the treasurer of the cathedral chapter, Philip de la Rose.⁽¹⁾ Ceremony marked the formal opening of the Norman Échiquier at Rouen on 14 October 1448, with Somerset in full ducal regalia, leading a procession of captains and officials from the castle to the cathedral to hear mass.⁽²⁾ On a more informal level, on the evening of 23 June 1449 the bourgeois of the town entertained Somerset, Talbot and other English captains to a meal, after which Edmund presented his hosts with two fine pieces of silver and gold jewellery in the shape of cardinal's hats. The English party left to watch the lighting of bonfires outside the town celebrating the feast of St John the Baptist.⁽³⁾

What was the Norman reaction to Somerset as governor? The chronicler Thomas Basin was well acquainted with affairs in Normandy, and had met Somerset on a number of occasions as well as serving on important matters of government.⁽⁴⁾ His personal appraisal of the new governor presents perhaps the most accurate portrait. He describes a man approaching fifty years, still handsome, urbane and courteous, who wished to provide justice for all. But all these virtues were marred by a strong streak of avarice, this despite the great wealth he had inherited from his uncle Cardinal

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- (1) An account of the reception of the new governor is found in the register of the chapter of the cathedral, ADSM, G 2131, ff.188-188^v. The duke and duchess entered in full state by the Porte Sainte-Romaine.
- (2) A description of the opening of the Échiquier is in BN, Ms. Fr. 24112, (Coutumes de la Normandie), f.97.
- (3) Archives Communales de Rouen, A7, f.46. The bonfire, the feu de joie, was the traditional celebration for the feast of St. John the Baptist (23 or 24 June): M. Vloberg, Les Fêtes de France (Grenoble, 1936), 157.
- (4) Eg. a payment of 100 livres tournois to the bishop of Lisieux, royal councillor, mentioning that on the orders of Somerset he had been employed at Rouen on important matters concerning the realm (21 January 1449): BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.40.

Beaufort, and this was to have disastrous consequences.⁽¹⁾

The records bear out much of this picture. Somerset maintained good relations with the cathedral chapter, frequently employing the treasurer Philip de la Rose on government business.⁽²⁾ He seems also to have had a close connection with the order of the Célestins, to whom he granted lands on a number of occasions.⁽³⁾ He was to take a strong personal interest in the maintenance of justice and suppression of crime. On a visit to Caen a citizen appealed to the governor that soldiers had used his horses for twelve days without making any payment for them; Somerset ensured that proper compensation was made.⁽⁴⁾ When a criminal escaped

- (1) Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, II, 66-7. A number of people in Normandy were aware of the wealth Edmund Beaufort had inherited from his uncle. The cathedral chapter at Rouen were engaged in discussions with the duke concerning the recovery of some of the cardinal's jewels now in his possession, claiming that they had been left to the chapter in Bedford's will. The interview took place only a day before the English finally left Rouen (3 November 1449). Somerset replied that he had seen one, a chalice, and that he would look for the others on his return to England: Ch. de Beaupaire, Fondations Pieuses du Duc de Bedford à Rouen (Rouen, 1873), 11-12.
- (2) As well as sitting on the Grand Conseil and the Court of Requests, Philip de la Rose was also employed on the Norman Échiquier in October-November 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.43^v). An offering was made by Somerset in the chapel of Saint-Anne on 28 July 1449, which may have been a sign of some special attachment to the cathedral (ADSM, G 2134, f.3; C.T. Allmand, thesis cit., 48). Somerset's confirmation of the possessions of the chapter on 15 October 1449, was the last act made by the English towards the church in Rouen: L. Fallue, Histoire Politique et Religieuse de l'Église Métropolitaine et du Diocèse de Rouen (Rouen, 1850), II, 469.
- (3) Somerset granted 60 acres of land to the Célestins 6 July 1449. Another grant, from his own finances, was 45 acres 'pour la fondation d'ung obit' in their church (ADSM, G 9208, nos.21, 22).
- (4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/5988.

from prison, messengers were sent out to alert all the ports in eastern Normandy; when captured he was to be brought before Somerset himself to be punished.⁽¹⁾ Ironically the stern measures that were to be taken by the new administration to combat corruption and violence were to prove controversial and unpopular.

Edmund's first contact with the representatives of the duchy came at the meeting of the Norman estates at Rouen, originally to be held on 1 May 1448 but postponed by Somerset to 10 May.⁽²⁾ The small grant of 90,000 livres tournois was made for the next year.⁽³⁾ The size of this contribution, which was to cause the government some difficulty, served as a reminder that the Normans were unhappy about the prospect of bearing the full costs of the English occupation. It was after hearing the various grievances and petitions that Somerset's own administration really commenced.⁽⁴⁾ In response to the complaints of the delegates the level of assessment for the aides from the wealthiest occupations below noble rank were raised.⁽⁵⁾ It was at this time that Somerset decided on his first major attempt to reform the administration, the initiation of a réformation générale in Basse Normandie, the bailliages of Caen, Alençon and the Cotentin.

(1) ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.178; BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.135.

(2) AN, K68/29/2.

(3) Ch. de Beaupaire, Les États de Normandie sous la domination anglaise (Evreux, 1859), 98-9.

(4) Somerset's first administrative act concerned complaints over merchant's profits on the sale of salt in Argentan and Exmes (Rouen, 25 May 1448): BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5939. The estates had an influential role in the administration of the duchy through their voicing of grievances, both specific and general, a function that had been encouraged by the Regent Bedford (Rowe, 'Estates of Normandy under the duke of Bedford', 576-7).

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5941 (5 June).

The réformateurs généraux had originated in the late fourteenth century under Charles VI. They were specially appointed commissioners, with a mandate to investigate the conduct of all royal officers. They were able to inspect receipts and accounts of all royal servants, baillis, vicomtes, élus, receivers, and in the case of wrong-doing disciplinary measures could be taken, such as levying fines (amendes) or even imprisonment.⁽¹⁾ Thus the réformation provided a thorough check on the activities of local officials. As the commission of Zano de Castiglione, bishop of Bayeux (employed by Somerset in June 1448) ran, '... pour le fait de certaine Reformacione generale ... sur toutes gens officiers et autres de quelque estat nacion ou condicion qu'ils soient dont et sur lesquels complaints ont este sont ou seront faites en ce que Raison et justice puissante a ung chacun...'.⁽²⁾

Royal councillors had been frequently used by the Regent Bedford on regular commissions of inquiry. Trusted servants such as Gilles de Duremort, abbot of Fécamp, were employed on frequent tours of inspection. These visits allowed local people the opportunity to make complaints against the administration. In October 1428 an inquiry had been set up throughout the whole of Normandy to collect informations on local officials, captains, baillis and vicomtes. Commissioners were also sent out to investigate specific complaints.⁽³⁾ Such a policy of supervision by the council was to remain an essential feature of the duchy's administration demonstrated in York's inquiry into complaints of injustice in lower Normandy in 1444.⁽⁴⁾

(1) F. Lot and R. Fawtier, Histoire des Institutions Françaises au Moyen Age (Paris, 1958), II, 158.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 20880/87.

(3) Rowe, thesis cit., 126-7.

(4) Burney, thesis cit., 146.

However the revival of the full-scale réformation générale represented a far more drastic measure: the commission, with its powers to levy fines against offenders, had been used only rarely by Bedford and, on surviving evidence, never by his successors.

Commissions of inspection took place during June and July 1448. Official documents stated that it had been ordered '... a l'occasion de plusieurs griefs, complaints et pour le bien de justice ...'.⁽¹⁾ Commissioners included clergymen (the bishops of Avranches and Bayeux), English knights (John Hanford, Bertrand Entwhistle) councillors from the court of requests at Rouen (Guy de la Villette), lawyers and clerks.⁽²⁾ Somerset supervised the whole affair; the commissioners reported back to him at Rouen after finishing their tour. Any officers who had been unco-operative were summoned before the governor himself. William Barnaby, an élu at Domfront and Makyn of Longworth, captain of Tombelaine, were ordered to appear before Somerset at Rouen concerning the inquiries of the réformation, and to answer him on the charge that they had withheld evidence from the commission.⁽³⁾ Again officials whose accounts bore irregularities were summoned and questioned by the governor. Oliver Neel, the vicomte of Auge, was arrested and brought before Somerset for sums of money owed to the king.⁽⁴⁾

(1) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.14^v-15.

(2) Ibid., ff.15-16; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.207.

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.130.

(4) Ibid., f.118.

The sudden appearance of these inspectors, and the subsequent fines or dismissal of a number of officials caused resentment which was recalled and exploited by York in one of his articles against Somerset, who had:

'... chaunged and putt out of theire occupacion and your service, withoute skylle cause of reason, all the true and feithfull officers, for the most partie of all Normandy, and put in such as hym liked for his own singular availe and covetyes, as it apperith well, in as much as ther coulde noon of theym that were so put out be restored agayn withoute grete giftes and rewardes, which was full unfittyng.' (1)

Details both on the amount of these fines and on whom they were actually imposed is unfortunately lacking. Local receivers were appointed for the 'amendes et exploits de la Reformacion Generale', the proceeds were then delivered to the receiver-general at Rouen.⁽²⁾ Entries on the receiver-general's account refer to sums assigned from these amendes, without giving any indication of the total collected.⁽³⁾

The results of the inquiry were reported to special local assemblies of the estates, which met towards the end of September 1448.⁽⁴⁾ Those of the Cotentin had assembled at St-Lô, upper Normandy at Rouen and Basse Normandie at Caen to discuss matters '... moiennant justice, le paiement des souldoires et gens de guerre de garnisons et autres choses..'.⁽⁵⁾ Each met to consult on these topics with a number of royal officers. The estates at Rouen were opened on 25 September before the treasurer Osbert

(1) The Paston Letters, I, 104.

(2) Eg. Thomas Harpifeld, vicomte of Vire, was receiver of the amendes of the réformation générale taken in the bailliage of Caen (ADSM, Fonds Danquin Carton 11, no.95). The fines were collected by the clerks of the receiver-general and brought back to Rouen (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.78).

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.95.

(4) Beaurepaire, Les États de Normandie, 99-100.

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6037, 6038.

Mundeford, the chancellor Thomas Hoo, Jean Salvain the bailli of Rouen and Jean Lenfant, master of the court of requests. Those at Caen were opened three days earlier, on 22 September, by Somerset himself.⁽¹⁾ No financial contribution was asked for; these meetings were purely consultative and Somerset's decision to attend at Caen rather than Rouen was probably because the réformation générale had been confined to western Normandy.

While the réformation générale was being conducted, Somerset had made another, even more far-reaching decision, to revive the Norman Échiquier which had been in abeyance since the days of Bedford's Regency.⁽²⁾ The Échiquier formed the supreme court of the duchy. It was able to settle disputes between major landowners and to try appeals from inferior courts.⁽³⁾ In its origins a feudal assembly, drawn from the nobles and clergy, it was under the English occupation summoned from the baillis, royal stewards and lawyers from each bailliage.⁽⁴⁾ The court's commission

(1) Ibid., /6036; ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 7, no.44.

(2) The last assembly of the Échiquier had been in Rouen, Easter term 1426 (ADSM, Registre d'Échiquier, 1426, f.1).

(3) The vicomte's court usually dealt with minor civil cases, the bailli's with civil and criminal. The court was first used to settle major feudal disputes; it later came to exercise justice in other ways, as a court of appeal against both decisions from local courts and the malpractice of officials (Burney, thesis cit., 23-4).

(4) The composition of this court under the English occupation is clearly indicated from surviving registers. For example in the session held at Rouen Michaelmas term 1424 (13 October - 24 November) the central body consisted of a president, two knights, three masters of requests, three clerks, four lawyers, before whom were summoned all the baillis, royal stewards and lawyers from each bailliage (ADSM, Registre d'Échiquier, 1424, ff.1-2). The registers themselves, which are the principal source for the functioning of this court, were drawn up by the greffiers for both civil and criminal cases, but sadly all the criminal registers have since disappeared. The civil proceedings, presented within three days of the court opening, were entered in a large register,

was headed by trained personnel drawn from the clergy, English knights, royal councillors and lawyers. The Échiquier had been summoned early in Bedford's administration, in 1423, 1424 and 1426, but the English had found the assembly too clumsy and antiquated for their purposes and had replaced its functions by the court of the council, which sat and tried cases on a regular basis.⁽¹⁾

Somerset's decision to recall this body had been made by June 1448. On 27 June a poursuivant was sent from Rouen to Lisieux and Alençon, to the baillis or their lieutenants, on matters concerning representation at the Échiquier, due to be held at Rouen for the Michaelmas term, starting on 15 October 1448.⁽²⁾ More detailed preparations were underway by the beginning of October with royal officers and receivers assembling in each bailliage. The insecurity of the roads provided something of a problem. Proclamations were issued in the bailliages of Caen and the Cotentin that all who wished to attend the Échiquier were to assemble at Caen where troops would escort them to Rouen.⁽³⁾ A number of those

the Registre manuel. After the names of those involved in the case had been entered, a gap was left for details of the court's decision to be recorded later. The workings of the court and explanations of its legal terminology are provided in F. Soudet, Ordonnances de l'Échiquier de Normandie au quatorzième et quinzième siècles (Rouen, 1929). The subject is also comprehensively discussed by E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 23-45.

- (1) P. le Cacheux, 'L'organisation judiciaire en Normandie pendant l'occupation anglaise (1419-49)', Revue Historique de droit français et étranger, XV (1936), 812-3. Cacheux points out that the Échiquier was not really suited to the English methods of administration and that for this reason Bedford had replaced it with the court of law of the council.
- (2) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.104. The composition of the central court was being arranged some time later. Letters of Somerset were dispatched 28 September to Philip de la Rose, Nicholas Davy, Jean du Mesnil and Bertrand Entwhistle concerning their assistance in the conducting of the Échiquier (ibid., f.110^v).
- (3) Ibid., f.111^v.

attending from the bailliages of western Normandy suffered attacks from brigands on their way to Rouen.⁽¹⁾

It is difficult to be sure of Somerset's motives for the recall of this assembly. There were legal and judicial justifications for his decision. Although most cases formerly processed by the Échiquier were dealt with by the court of law of the council, a number required the higher authority of the older assembly. A backlog had built up over the years with some disputes being suspended from as far back as 1432.⁽²⁾ As a result of the truce cases had arisen between Normans in French-held areas of the duchy and those under the English occupation, and again the wider authority of the more traditional body was necessary.⁽³⁾ As far as English landowners were concerned, this court was still important in terms of private property rights (which were often authenticated by enrolment during its proceedings) or settling outstanding cases between big feudatories, something Somerset himself, as a major landowner was to appreciate the advantage of.⁽⁴⁾

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- (1) Orders from Somerset to the captain of Orbec 'pour prendre et apprehendre certains larrons et aggresseurs des chemins qui avoient destroussez certaines personnes qui venoient a l'eschequier de normendie' (16 November 1448): BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6033.
 - (2) Resumés of such cases were recorded in the Registre des Appointements along with agreements made between parties during the actual course of the Échiquier. These registers are missing for the three sessions of Bedford's Regency but fortunately one survives for 1448. These two sources for the Échiquier (both kept at ADSM and henceforth referred to simply by the title of the register) give a partial picture of the proceedings in 1448. These records were never intended to be comprehensive, and serve only to record minutes of the pleas given by the parties and the registration of private agreements: F. Soudet, op.cit., xxiv. For a case going back to 1432 see Registre des Appointements, f.58^v.
 - (3) Actions included a case against a member of the French garrison of Granville concerning an unjust imprisonment and the levies (appatis) demanded by the French garrison of Mont-St-Michel (Registre des Appointements, ff.64^v-5, 92-92^v).
 - (4) Cases before the Échiquier of 1448 involved many of the prominent members of the English aristocracy, Somerset, York, Suffolk, Buckingham, Shrewsbury (Registre manuel, f.28, 30^v, 46, 470).

There were however other important factors that would justify the reassembling of the Échiquier. It was an important criminal court (both for common-law crimes and offences against the duchy) and a court of appeal against the malpractice of officials. Unfortunately little evidence survives concerning this aspect of its jurisdiction.⁽¹⁾ It had the power to call upon local officials to make thorough inquiries (informations) concerning complaints of criminal behaviour, and to arrest and bring before it those concerned. Chance references give an indication of this aspect of administration of justice. In November 1448 orders were sent from the Échiquier in session at Rouen to the bailli of the Cotentin instructing him to carry out an information on '... certaines bateries et maux fais par Jehan Watre anglais'.⁽²⁾ Combined with the réformation générale this represented part of Somerset's drive to combat crime and disorder in the duchy.

However there did exist less altruistic motives for the governor's recall of this ancient body. Many of Somerset's own property disputes were involved in the Échiquier's deliberations, and arguably could have offered an opportunity to apply his own influence in securing a favourable result. Certainly his disputing and winning Sir William Oldhall's title to the lucrative barony of Roncheville (which the latter had held since 1437) cannot have endeared itself to York's chamberlain.⁽³⁾ Moreover a revival of the Échiquier offered an

(1) C.T. Allmand, thesis cit., 102, commenting on the court's reputation for not tolerating the sharp practices of royal officials.

(2) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.115,

(3) This important case was pointed out by E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 250, though the evidence cited, Registre des Appointements, ff.20^v-21^v, concerns only the cession to Somerset of the claim of a rival party (Theobald and Walter Gorges). However further entries on the Registre manuel, f.81, show Simon des Places, representing Oldhall, conceding his rights to the barony of Roncheville to Somerset, save for a hostel and manor at Honfleur. Oldhall had been granted Roncheville by York on 18 September 1437 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.401).

additional source of income to the government through the charges for dispensing justice and the fines (amendes) for defaulting a case. The sudden revival of cases that had been held in abeyance for many years seems to have caught out many who had made the original appeal, in some cases over a decade ago. Defaults were numerous, and the subsequent collection of the judicial fines for non-attendance must have been very unpopular in the duchy.⁽¹⁾ Again York made reference to this feature of the administration in his articles against Somerset:

'And furthermore did put in prison many diverse and notable persons of your seid Duchie, withoute cause, justice or any ordinairie processe made agayn theym or due examinacion, and by that meane did grete extorcions and rered unlawfully grete sommes undre colour of amendes and composicions, whereby the cuntre for such wrong and faute of justice gruced sore agayn hym and his governaunce...'.⁽²⁾

There is little evidence on the amount collected through these fines or the number of imprisonments made for non-payment. A number of assignments were made from the amendes, the first being some 1,000 livres tournois to Somerset himself to make up a deficit in his first year's compensation for the loss of Maine.⁽³⁾

The formal opening of the Échiquier took place on Tuesday 14 October 1448 with an opening address from the president of the court, Jean Lenfant. Those in attendance at the castle at Rouen included Somerset

(1) Convincingly argued by Burney, thesis cit., 43-5, citing the large number of cases marked in deffault (where the original bringer of the petition, not being present at the hearing, was put in amende by the court and was thus liable for a large fine). Moreover, in contrast to the registers for the sessions of 1423, 1424 and 1426, no réspis (delays in presenting a case) were awarded by the court. If the Registre manuel for 1448 exists intact, as it appears to, it suggests that the placing of so many cases in deffault was particularly harsh.

(2) The Paston Letters, I, 104.

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.20; BN, Pièces Originales, 2081 (Mundeford)/4.

and principal captains and baillis.⁽¹⁾ The next day proceedings began in earnest with the arrival of all the local officers. Jean Lenfant, who headed the court, had been a Caen doctor of law; he had risen steadily through the English administration to become a prominent judicial figure. Appointed rector of the university in 1440, he had become a master of requests at the court of the council and finally its president.⁽²⁾ His career provides an example of the importance of the university at Caen for providing trained men for the English administration. Somerset kept close contacts with the university and made special efforts to ensure the wages of its members were regularly paid.⁽³⁾ The other men serving on the court had in many cases also been commissioners on the réformation générale a few months earlier. The bishop of Bayeux, the English knights Bertrand Entwhistle and John Hanford, the councillor of the court of law, Guy de la Villette, were all employed again.⁽⁴⁾ Along with clerks and lawyers a significant member was François de Surienne, who had assumed an important part in the military organisation of the duchy under Somerset and was soon to lead the attack on Fougères that had such disastrous consequences.⁽⁵⁾ Proceedings were to continue over the next two months; they do not seem to have been completed until late December.⁽⁶⁾

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 24112, f.97.

(2) Burney, thesis cit., 148. Lenfant received 180 livres tournois for his services as president of the Échiquier (this in addition to his regular wages): BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.42^v.

(3) Eg. Somerset ensured payment of arrears of wages to members of the faculty of medicine (16 February 1449): BN, Ms. Fr. 22469, f.68. Wages were maintained even after the loss of Rouen (BN, Ms. Fr. 26079/6181).

(4) Unlike the earlier registers the Registre manuel of 1448 does not list those employed on the court. Many members are however listed in the receiver-general's account (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.42^v-45).

(5) Registre des Appointements, f.14^v.

(6) Most officials seem to have been paid for their services in attending the court by 28 December 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.43-44^v).

Some of the cases could be dealt with quickly, simply requiring a legal pronouncement from the masters holding the Échiquier; others, more difficult, would require a hearing for the parties concerned, or even a further information (taken by the local bailli) to provide more details on the case.⁽¹⁾ But it seems likely that of all the cases on record to be brought before the court, only a small proportion actually received attention. A large number of defaults arose, where one or both parties had failed to arrive for the presentation of the case.⁽²⁾ The sudden revival of the Échiquier, and the fact that many of the disputes were ten or fifteen years old, resulted in a large number of pleadings being pronounced in amende (an action brought by the court against the original bringer of the doléance, an appeal from an inferior court).⁽³⁾ The judicial proceedings against these parties continued after the sessions of the Échiquier had finished with Somerset himself supervising them.⁽⁴⁾

There was, however, little opportunity to gauge the effect either of the Échiquier or other administrative measures for within a few months war was again imminent. The capture and sack of Fougères by the English,

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- (1) The simplest formula was a jugement, a legal pronouncement on the case. If difficulties were present the case was deferred for formal deliberation by the court, with the production of both written information and hearings from the parties concerned (audiendi). During the course of these proceedings the local bailli could be ordered to make further inquiries, or to confiscate property pending the inquiry (F. Soudet, op.cit. xi, 3,5,6).
- (2) Cases in deffault were entered into the Registre manuel.
- (3) Burney, thesis cit., 43-5.
- (4) Eg. Somerset remitting a fine on appeal of the party concerned: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 16, f.315 (Rouen, 20 February 1449). Rolls of amendes were drawn up and sent to the local vicomtes. The fines were held by the local officials before being collected by the clerks to the receiver-general and returned to Rouen. Assignments were made on the amendes from the Échiquier but there survives no indication of the total collected (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.131^v, 78, 23-23^v).

on 23 March 1449, had an immediate effect on the duchy, with all trade with Breton and French merchants ceasing.⁽¹⁾ The situation was to grow increasingly serious. The next meeting of the Norman estates had been planned to be held at Caen on 28 April 1449.⁽²⁾ However the arrival of the French ambassadors at Rouen in April delayed Somerset's plans and he postponed the assembly at Caen to 8 May.⁽³⁾ But events were to move too quickly for him. The determination of some of the French to seek immediate retaliation for Fougères was revealed in an attempt to capture the town of Mantes towards the end of April.⁽⁴⁾ With the situation growing critical, Somerset evidently did not wish to leave Rouen and countermanded his orders.⁽⁵⁾ What was now proposed was that the estates of lower Normandy (the bailliages of Caen, Alençon and the Cotentin) would still meet at Caen while those of upper Normandy (the bailliages of Rouen, Caux and Gisors) would now meet at Rouen. While Somerset remained in Rouen the treasurer, Osbert Mundeford and Talbot were sent

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- (1) A. Bénet, op.cit., 178, from the town accounts of Lisieux 1448-9; E. de Fréville, Mémoire sur le Commerce Maritime de Rouen (Rouen, 1857), I, 277, citing the town records of Rouen. In this last period of the English occupation, revenues from trade dropped dramatically: M. Mollat, Le Commerce Maritime Normand à la fin du Moyen Age (Paris, 1952), 74.
- (2) The date was given in a letter from Somerset to Henry Redford, captain of Alençon (26 March 1449): BN, Ms. Fr. 22469, f.55.
- (3) Charles VII's commissioners, Cousinot and Fontenil, had reached Rouen 7 April 1449; they were to leave on 22 April. On 15 April Somerset decided to postpone the estates at Caen because of this embassy: Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII, IV, 321; BN, Ms. Fr. 22469, f.57.
- (4) A deputation from the town was sent to Somerset at Rouen on 23 April to protest about this attack (Archives Communales de Mantes, BB 5, f.19^v).
- (5) Ch. de Beaurepaire, Les États de Normandie, 100-1. Somerset seems to have decided on this by 28 April when letters of his were dispatched to the bailli of Caux, '... pour lesquelles ledit seigneur Duc fait savoir audit bailli de Caux que l'assemblée de trois états qu'il avoit convoquée pour être tenu à Caen le 8 Mai prochain a été par lui transférée en la ville de Rouen pour y être tenu ledit 8 Mai' (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 16, f.319).

to preside over the estates at Caen along with the bishops of Avranches and Coutances.⁽¹⁾

It was while the estates were in session that news came of the French seizure of Pont-de-l'Arche and the capture of Lord Fauconberg (13 May). With the prospect of a further outbreak of hostilities the estates voted the more substantial sum of 188,000 livres tournois for the next year.⁽²⁾ The English were to gather little beyond the first quarter's instalment. The French formally declared war on 31 July 1449 and within two months much of eastern and western Normandy had been overrun. Somerset, isolated in Rouen, had to resort to more dubious financial methods to pay his troops.⁽³⁾ Collection of the aide had broken down in most parts of the duchy, and other captains faced similar dilemmas. Mathew Gough had to resort to the extortion of forced loans from the chapter of Bayeux to provide his soldiers' wages.⁽⁴⁾ The surrender of Rouen at the end of October 1449 meant the Chambre des Comptes passed into the hands of the French, ending effective English administration in the duchy.

On his arrival in Caen, Somerset organised as best he could a 'skeleton administration' of those lands still under English military

(1) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.75^v. Beaurepaire (Les États, 100-1) wrongly suggests that the estates were completely transferred to Rouen.

(2) The amount of the aide voted by the estates in May 1449 is referred to in BL, Add. Ch. 4064. Collection of the first instalment of this was underway in June.

(3) In return for a large loan to pay his troops from Jean Marcel, money-changer at Rouen, Somerset on 1 October 1449 changed the rate of exchange of the blanc from 10 to 11 d.t. This was to provide Marcel, who had large numbers of blancs stockpiled, remuneration for his loan (M. Mollat, op.cit., 48).

(4) E. de Laheudrie, Bayeux, Capitale du Bessin, 405.

control. The local sergeants in the vicomté of Bayeux had not collected since August 1449, and the governor delegated the task of financial supervision to his own household servants. Jacques Brucelles, his secretary, was made responsible for collecting the tax, and some 6,000 livres tournois had been successfully delivered to Caen by 15 December 1449.⁽¹⁾ The assignment system was reduced to the revenues of the English-held vicomtés of Bayeux and Falaise.⁽²⁾ With the absence of treasury officials, Somerset was forced to audit the accounts of the vicomte of Caen himself.⁽³⁾ Such an ad hoc system continued for the last months of the occupation, until French troops encircled Caen at the beginning of June 1450, with the result that the garrison of Falaise had to collect the aide from the vicomté itself.⁽⁴⁾

The view of Somerset's regime was inevitably coloured by the disastrous military collapse against the French, which caused a subsequent distrust of his entire administration. Contemporary reaction, both English and French, saw his government as harsh and avaricious. While Edmund's self-interest was clearly evident in such matters as the compensation for Maine, the broad scope of the measures he undertook seem, on the evidence available, to have been a vigorous if somewhat ruthless attempt to reform and improve both the finances and general conditions of the duchy. If some of these actions appeared drastic

(1) BL, Add. Ch. 1516. Brucelles collected another quarter's revenue from the vicomté on 14 April 1450 (BL, Add. Ch. 12409).

(2) For an assignment made on the vicomté of Falaise, 26 February 1450, see BN, Ms. Fr. 26079/6181.

(3) Somerset audited the accounts of Thomas Pellevé, vicomte of Caen, on 12 May 1450, 'au deffault des gens de comptes n'ont point encore ete instituees en Normandie depuis la rebellion nagueres faire par ceux de la ville de Rouen' (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.261).

(4) ADC, F (Fonds Danquin) 1407/3 (8 June 1450). Caen finally surrendered on 24 June.

to contemporaries, they had to be set against a general background of financial difficulty. For Somerset was faced with an impasse: the Norman estates less and less willing to bear the burden of the English occupation without substantial aid, the English government insisting that peace-time costs were to be met from the duchy's own resources. The duke's own communication to parliament in May 1449 warned that the Normans were no longer prepared to accept such an arrangement.⁽¹⁾ It is against this wider context that Somerset's administration has to be evaluated.

(1) RP, V, 147. References to financial shortage occur in the Norman records, as in January 1449, in a mandate concerning the payment of wages to John Lord Talbot, 'en retenant, vu le mauvais etat des finances, les gages d'un mois sur chaque quartier (AN, K68/29, no.6).

(iv) Diplomacy and Military Affairs 1448-50

The role of the king's lieutenant-general in France was not primarily a diplomatic one. Any new initiative to secure a peace, whether towards France, Burgundy or Brittany, would usually be directed by the English government. For the most part it was the king and English council who decided on the appointment of new ambassadors and the extent of their negotiating powers.⁽¹⁾ The major embassies for Arras in 1435, Calais in 1439 and Tours in 1444, had not directly involved the lieutenant-general though small delegations were included from the Norman government.⁽²⁾ The lieutenant-general's governing commission was intended for military and civil matters. He could issue safe-conducts or ratify agreements on behalf of the king but he held no independent negotiating authority and any actions in this respect, such as the duke of York's opening of the convention to discuss the Armagnac marriage in 1442, had to be empowered by a separate commission.⁽³⁾

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- (1) These letters of proxy were drawn up for the ambassadors under letters patent under the great seal. They summarised the reasons for the embassy, the requirements for an agreement and the ratification of the king if this agreement was reached. Separate letters of credence defined the precise extent of the envoy's discretion. While the enrolment of the former are found in the Treaty Rolls no trace of the latter survives: J. Ferguson, English Diplomacy 1422-1461 (Oxford, 1972), 157-61.
- (2) The negotiations of 1435 (for which the English embassy consisted of Cardinal Beaufort, the earls of Huntingdon and Suffolk, Archbishop Kemp and the bishops of Norwich and St. David's and William Lynwood keeper of the privy seal) are thoroughly surveyed in J.G. Dickinson, The Congress of Arras, 1435 (Oxford, 1955). The best consideration of those of 1439 (again with Beaufort, Kemp, the bishops of Norwich and St. David's, along with the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Oxford, Lords Bouchier and Hungerford and others) is by C.T. Allmand, 'The Anglo-French negotiations, 1439', BIHR, XL (1967), 1-33. There is no specialised work on the truce of Tours, 1444, in which the English embassy was headed by the earl of Suffolk, accompanied by Adam Moleyns, keeper of the privy seal, Sir Robert Roos and others. The full text is printed in E. Cosneau, Les Grands Traités de la Guerre de Cent Ans (Paris, 1889), 152-171. A good general commentary is R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 482-90.
- (3) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 462.

However the situation at the time of Edmund Beaufort's arrival in Normandy in April 1448 was somewhat different. The extensions of the truce of Tours and the cession of Maine were intended by Henry VI as a prelude to a more permanent peace. In the interim Charles VII was informed that the safeguarding of the truce on the English side would be the special responsibility of Somerset, who was shortly to cross over to France.⁽¹⁾ The appointment of both Somerset and Mundeford as commissioners to treat for peace in April 1448 emphasised the importance of the Norman government's role in future negotiations with the French.⁽²⁾ It is likely that Henry saw Somerset's post as governor very much in terms of the maintenance of the truce, and Edmund had mandate to appoint commissioners himself for the smaller conferences with the French side.

The first commission nominated by Somerset, at Rouen on 5 June 1448, consisted of Osbert Mundeford, William Chamberlain, John Stanlawe, Jean Lenfant and Louis Galet.⁽³⁾ Its purpose was to negotiate in further detail the arrangements concerning the regulation of the truce. The truce of Tours had laid down a number of items on the keeping of the peace. All warlike activities by either party were forbidden. If any town or castle were captured by another party it was to be returned at that party's own expense. No repair or reconstruction of any fortification along the frontier was allowed; if any had been made it was to be demolished. Local inhabitants were to be allowed freedom of movement in travelling

(1) Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III (Pièces Justificatives), 172-5 (11 December 1447).

(2) PRO, C76/130, m.6 (6 April 1448).

(3) Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII, IV, 310, n.6.

from one side to the other, with the exception of entry into sites of military importance. Judicial process was to be permitted between the two sides for the settlement of debts and other private actions. If offences were committed against the tenor of these articles they were to be dealt with by imprisonment and appropriate means of justice.⁽¹⁾

Numerous complaints concerning breaches of the truce had built up and now that the question of Maine had finally been settled it was clearly time to set out a more detailed structure for maintaining these provisions. Already at the treaty of Lavardin (11 March 1448) arrangements for the appointment of conservateurs of the truce had been outlined.⁽²⁾ The agreement reached at Rouen on 12 June provided a clearer and more detailed picture of how they would operate.⁽³⁾

Both sides were to appoint a number of conservateurs, to act as a court of judicial appeal against complaints of infractions of the truce. They were to meet with their opposite party twice a year to discuss any problems arising from this. A stricter watch was to be kept on the carrying of arms, with the issuing of licences by garrison captains and their lieutenants. Violations of the truce could be met with by capital punishment and either party was to be allowed facilities for taking malefactors to justice. In such cases it was the responsibility of the captain of the nearest town or fortress to apprehend those guilty and

(1) E. Cosneau, Les Grands Traités, 162-70.

(2) Rymer, XI, 206-9.

(3) A full text of this agreement exists in the Archives Communales d'Amiens, AA 11 (Registre des Chartes de la ville d'Amiens, 1431-54), ff.67^v-74. The appointement concluded at Rouen (12 June) had been proclaimed at Amiens on 28 June 1448.

and bring them into captivity. If any difficulties arose from such cases higher justice was to be available, on the side of Charles VII the Parlement of Paris, on that of Somerset the court of law of the Grand Conseil at Rouen. Two items concerned the particular problem of violations of the truce by troops. If a crime was committed by a member of a garrison it was the responsibility of the captain to hand him over to the conservateurs. Because of complaints on both sides of those soldiers living off the land outside regular garrison supervision, it was agreed that local officials (senechals, baillis and vicomtes) were to make informations on all troops 'vivans sur le pays'. The conclusion of this agreement was marked by an undertaking that both sides were to meet again in August 1448 for a full conference, either at Pont-de-l'Arche or alternatively Louviers, to discuss all infractions of the truce between the agreement of Tours and the present deliberations.

Appearances indicated definite progress towards a more permanent peace; the reality of the situation was very different. If Somerset's commission was to develop the truce laid down at Tours, in the interim the diplomatic position of the English government had undergone a crucial change. The crux of the problem was the role of Brittany in the negotiations. At Tours Brittany had been included among the vassals of the king of France without any protest from the English side.⁽¹⁾

In March 1446 the pro-French Duke Francis had strengthened this position by doing personal homage to Charles VII at Chinon.⁽²⁾ A more telling

(1) E. Cosneau, Les Grands Traités, 163. Brittany was included between the dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon as a vassal of the king of France.

(2) A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 309.

event was to follow. The duke's brother Gilles, a personal friend of Henry VI and strongly pro-English, was arrested in June 1446. The imprisonment of Gilles outraged opinion in both England and Normandy and by 1447 there were already plans to capture a Breton town to serve as a bargaining-point for his release.⁽¹⁾ It also caused a complete reassessment of Anglo-Breton relations based on the reassertion of Henry VI's sovereignty over the duchy.

The treaty of Lavardin saw this question reopened with the English side insisting that Brittany was their own vassal.⁽²⁾ This stance was to be repeated in all future negotiations with the French. Probably as a result of this the English also took the stand that Henry's title as king of England and France was again non-negotiable, for only by maintaining this position could a claim to sovereignty over Brittany be justified.⁽³⁾ These new diplomatic developments, which contradicted

(1) Ibid., 311-14.

(2) The traditional story that Brittany was placed among the vassals of the king of England in the text of the treaty without the knowledge of the French (by subterfuge, the documents being exchanged at midnight) has recently been questioned by B.P. Wolffe. The deposition of the English ambassadors at the last conference at Port-St -Ouen, June 1449, was that the commissioners sent to negotiate at Lavardin had specifically been instructed by Henry VI not to treat unless Brittany was not included as an ally of Charles VII. Wolffe suggests that the graphic story of a last-minute alteration of the treaty was invented by the French side at a later date. The earliest version of this goes back only to 1464, when Louis XI was gathering evidence against a renewed claim to Brittany by Edward IV. Instead the French may have acceded to the altered status of Brittany at Lavardin in order to ensure the evacuation of Le Mans (B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 202-3).

(3) Ibid., 207. This was the reason for Somerset addressing Charles only as 'uncle in France' which the king found derogatory to his honour: Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III, 243-4 (letter of Somerset to Charles VII, 9 July).

the original basis of the treaty of Tours were to prove a major source of friction between the two sides. Although it was the wish of the Bretons to be included in discussions as vassals of Charles VII, the English refused to accept this. The issue was never satisfactorily resolved, and prevented any further progress towards a peace. On the contrary the steady deterioration of Anglo-Breton relations and the border incidents that culminated in the capture and sack of Fougères in March 1449, were to lead to a diplomatic breakdown and the disastrous reopening of the war.⁽¹⁾ This inherent impasse faced Somerset as he commenced negotiations with the French.

The new governor had a reservoir of experienced personnel to assist his diplomatic efforts. There were men like Robert Roos or Reginald Boulers, abbot of Gloucester, who had crossed to Normandy in an embassy in January 1448 and were to remain in Normandy during much of Somerset's lieutenancy.⁽²⁾ Sir Robert Roos was an experienced diplomat who had served Henry on many occasions during the 1440s. His presence in Normandy during most of 1448 reflected the king's own wish that future negotiations were to be conducted principally by the Norman government rather than from England.⁽³⁾ Reginald Boulers became a key figure both in commissions to treat with the French and on important matters of liaison with the English government.⁽⁴⁾ Thomas Hoo, the Norman chancellor, who had been involved in the negotiations over the surrender

(1) B.P. Wolffe, Henry VI, 207-8.

(2) R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 541, n.117.

(3) On 4 December 1448 400 livres tournois was paid to Robert Roos on the orders of Somerset for his services on a number of diplomatic missions (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.22^v).

(4) He was a leading member of delegations to England November 1448 and May 1449, and one of the principal commissioners treating with the French at Louviers, August-September 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.55^v, 58, 62).

of Maine, was similarly employed.⁽¹⁾ The most important member of Somerset's administration involved in diplomatic affairs was his treasurer Osbert Mundeford, who was employed on a long succession of commissions.⁽²⁾ Other members of the Norman council nominated for various matters included clergy such as the archbishop of Rouen and the bishop of Bayeux and legal councillors, principally Jean Lenfant and Louis Galet, who had to deal with tricky technical problems concerning the truce.⁽³⁾ Clerks and secretaries would usually be included in commissions as well.⁽⁴⁾ The most prominent of the English aristocracy

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- (1) Hoo accompanied the abbot of Gloucester to England November 1448. He was paid a salary of 1,000 livres tournois (compared with 500 livres tournois for Boulers) which suggests he was the leader of the delegation (Ibid., f.55).
- (2) Mundeford was one of the commissioners treating with the French at the conferences at Louviers, August-September and November 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.104^v; Beaucourt, op.cit., IV, p.319). He was one of the principal members of the embassy at Venables, Louviers and Bonport, 25-29 June 1449 (Stevenson, Narratives of the Expulsion of the English from Normandy, 413-82). Mundeford was also employed frequently as a conservateur of the truce. He was head of the delegation treating with the French at La Ferté-Bernard, 13 July 1448, over the contested levying of appatis in Maine (ADS, H 305). He and Louis Galet were consulting with the French at Pont-de-l'Arche and Harcourt over breaches of the truce, January-February 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.74-5; Bodleian Library, Foreign Ch. 489, 490). He was sent to lower Normandy to hear complaints of infractions of the truce, March-April 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.75).
- (3) Raoul Roussel, archbishop of Rouen, was one of the principal members of the English embassy at Louviers, August and November 1448 (Rymer, XI, 223-5). Legal councillors such as Louis Galet were frequent negotiators in the subsequent practical problems which followed the truce (Burney, thesis cit., 146). Jean Lenfant was the chief English ambassador at the final conferences with the French, 15 June - 4 July (Stevenson, Narratives of the Expulsion 396-514).
- (4) The clerk Jean Cousin was sent with Jean Lenfant in an abortive embassy to Charles VII on 9 July 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.66^v). French secretaries, who again had legal training, frequently were sent on deputations for the governor, eg. Michael de Paris visiting England on behalf of Somerset December 1448 (Burney, thesis cit., 153-8).

serving in France, Lords Talbot and Fauconberg, were employed at the major conferences; other knights were often used in smaller missions.⁽¹⁾ In addition to these men, Somerset could draw on the Chapter of Heralds that existed at Rouen as well as numerous pursuivants and other messengers.⁽²⁾ The governor himself would attend the most important conferences or arrive to confer with his ambassadors over some difficult point of negotiation; resident in Rouen he would receive the emissaries and messengers of Charles VII.⁽³⁾

Before the planned conference at Louviers and Pont-de-l'Arche a serious problem had already arisen concerning the English occupation of the frontier fortresses of St.-James-de-Beuvron and Mortain, both on the Breton marches. A letter of complaint from Charles VII to Somerset, referring to the occupation of St.-James-de-Beuvron by English troops evacuating Maine, had been delivered as early as 1 June 1448.⁽⁴⁾ Fresh protests revealed serious friction developing between Charles VII and the new governor. In a communication to Henry just before the conference at Louviers, Charles complained at the fortification at St.-James-de-Beuvron but now referred explicitly to captains under Somerset's command, adding that he had received no satisfactory answer to this protest.⁽⁵⁾

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- (1) Lords Talbot and Fauconberg were among the English delegates at Louviers in August and September and also November 1448 (Rymer, XI, 223-5). Knights were often used by Somerset in small embassies e.g. Henry Norbury, despatched with a small retinue (3 archers) July 1448 to the duke of Brittany; ADC, F(Fonds Danquin) 1253, no.11. John Hanford was a member of a deputation carrying letters of Somerset to Charles VII at the end of April 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.35-35^V).
- (2) Burney, thesis cit., 158; BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.35^V-36, 69, 70^V, 107^V.
- (3) Eg. Somerset visiting the English commissioners at Pont-de-l'Arche in January 1449; receiving the secretary of Charles VII, Jean Herbert, at Rouen (December 1448) and presenting him with a silver goblet (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.123^V; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, f.185).
- (4) Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 310-11.
- (5) Ibid., 312-14.

These two areas of contention arose from the military reorganisation made by Somerset on his arrival in Normandy. During June 1448 a number of his trusted captains and experienced soldier-administrators were engaged in mustering and reviewing the garrison troops all over Normandy. These tours of inspection were a usual feature on the arrival of a new lieutenant-general. John Court, a close follower of Somerset and his bailli at Mortain, was commissioned to review troops at Caen, Bayeux, Vire, Domfront and St-Lô on 10 June 1448.⁽¹⁾ The same day Richard Frogenhall, the duke's bailli at Harcourt, and his receiver John Kyriell, were appointed to review the garrisons of Pont-de-l'Arche, Elbeuf, Gaillard, Vernon and Verneuil.⁽²⁾ Others employed included Richard Harrington, the bailli at Caen and the experienced professional soldier François de Surienne.⁽³⁾

In addition to the inspections of the regular garrisons, efforts were being made to gather some of the troops 'vivans sur le pays'. Several groups were assembled at Torigni in lower Normandy during July.⁽⁴⁾ To deal with these unemployed soldiers and to provide a measure of general security, a system of mobile field forces was made use of. These usually consisted of a strength of ten lances and thirty archers, all mounted, who were deployed in areas of local instability. It was such a force that by September had been despatched under John Court to cover the region around Mortain.⁽⁵⁾ This, the seat of Somerset's own comté in south-west

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5934.

(2) BL, Add. Ch. 6986.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 25778/1814, 1815. Surienne was employed inspecting a number of garrisons in lower Normandy (A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 318-19). Servants of the governor similarly engaged included Lewis Rede and William Rygmaiden (BN, Ms. Fr. 25778/1813).

(4) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.7, 8, 17.

(5) BN, Pièces Originales 888(Court), nos.2, 3. Court, who had served in Edmund's personal retinue during his previous tour of duty in Normandy from 1439-40, was to remain at Mortain until the castle's loss to the French in 1449 (ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 3, II/3; Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 624).

Normandy, had had its old castle demolished in 1435.⁽¹⁾ Since then defence had been provided by a fortified manor house but on Edmund's arrival in France in 1448 a major new castle was being constructed with the duke paying visits to inspect its progress.⁽²⁾ It was this new fortification that was drawing complaints from the French.

The case of St -James-de-Beuvron was far more serious. Lying much closer to the Breton frontier it had only been occupied at times of crisis such as the war with Brittany in 1427.⁽³⁾ The dismantled fortress had been the base for unemployed freebooting English troops raiding on the Breton marches even before the evacuation of Maine.⁽⁴⁾ However by September 1448 it had been incorporated by Somerset into the regular garrison system.⁽⁵⁾ Such an action was provocative towards Brittany and marked the seriousness of the deterioration in relations towards the duchy.

These new difficulties were already present as the first of the English ambassadors left Rouen for the conference at Louviers on 22 August 1448.⁽⁶⁾ Two days later the opening session between the two sides was

(1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.183.

(2) There is a description of the new castle, which was still under construction in July 1449 when war broke out, in Blondel, 81. For a visit of the duke of Somerset to Mortain, see ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11, no.179.

(3) R. Cintré, Les Marches de Bretagne, 81.

(4) Towards the middle of 1447 a number of freebooting troops under Lord Camoys had lodged themselves at St - James-de-Beuvron (BN, Ms. Fr. 26076/5716).

(5) On 25 September 1448 letters were despatched from Mundeford at Rouen 'au lieutenant, chief du conduiseur de certains gens d'armes et de trait estans en garnison audit lieu de Saint James...' concerning payment of their wages (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.107). Roger Meaulx was acting as lieutenant there by the end of the year (BL, Birch Ms. 4101, f.39).

(6) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.104^V.

at the hôtel du Mouton at Louviers.⁽¹⁾ Guillaume Cousinot, leading the French delegation, again raised the question of the new fortifications. Adam Moleyns, replying for the English, assured the conference of the king's wish to honour the truce and repair all infractions. He then added that St - James-de-Beuvron had always been under English obedience, it was on the marches of Brittany not France and that the duke of Brittany had been included in the truce as the subject of the king of England. Cousinot countered that Brittany was now under the obedience of the king of France and as such was included in the truce and that St - James-de-Beuvron and Mortain had been newly fortified in contravention of the agreement at Tours and as such should be dealt with. With a situation of deadlock, Moleyns left the embassy to consult with Somerset, who had arrived at Pont-de-l'Arche on 3 September.⁽²⁾ Little resulted from this meeting. On his return the Breton envoy, Michael de Parthenay, insisted that his master wished to be regarded as a subject of the king of France. Cousinot added that since Charles had taken Brittany under his protection all matters affecting the duchy were his own concerns. In a state of deadlock the conference was postponed until November.⁽³⁾

In the interim Somerset received a vague letter from Henry VI expressing his confidence in him not to cause a breach of the truce nor to cause the French to bring an embassy over to England, for he and his council would have no information on the details of the complaints.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Bonnin, Cartulaire de Louviers, II, 166-70; Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 315.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 1685 (Lenfant), no.22.

(3) Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 316.

(4) Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III, 204-5.

At the end of October Somerset and the other ambassadors in Normandy sent Garter^{King}_A-at-Arms to England to clarify their instructions; chiefly the attitude they were to take to the Breton negotiators and the extent they should go to avoid a rupture of the truce. The king and council despatched a reply that on the matter of Brittany they must try if at all possible for separate negotiations and if this was not feasible to make a stand on the issue of the prejudice to Henry's rightful title. On the vital matter of how the ambassadors were to avoid the collapse of the truce, the council declined to offer any line of conduct beyond suggesting a series of postponements.⁽¹⁾ These vague instructions abrogated all responsibility and left the state of negotiations suspended in a difficult and dangerous impasse. This lack of effective guidance from England was all the more critical in that plans for an attack on Fougères, which would seriously undermine any attempts to preserve the truce, were already well-known to Suffolk, and almost certainly to the king and other members of the council.⁽²⁾

The major conference which reopened in November at the church of St. Ouen near Louviers was to achieve little. Proceedings commenced at the beginning of the month but nothing of import was discussed before the full delegations had arrived on 11 November.⁽³⁾ Moleyns then declared that he had not the powers to treat with the representatives of Brittany as they were the subjects of the king of England. This again prevented any progress being made beyond a limited agreement (25 November)

(1) PPC, VI, 62-64.

(2) A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 312-3.

(3) Beaucourt, Charles VII, 319.

postponing negotiations until some time before May 1449.⁽¹⁾ With the proceedings finished Moleyns left France to report to the English council.⁽²⁾

Apart from a minor representation made to Somerset in December 1448 and the activities of Osbert Mundeford and Louis Galet meeting the French as conservateurs of the truce over some small incidents, diplomatic activity remained quiet over the next few months.⁽³⁾ In February 1449 Charles VII complained to both Somerset and Henry VI over the former's failure to make any redress over the question of St -James-de-Beuvron.⁽⁴⁾ The lack of a settlement over this outstanding issue was blamed by French and English opinion on Somerset's intransigence though in reality it had become a matter of principle far beyond the import of the governor's own commission. Since the question touched on Henry's own sovereignty no progress could be made without fresh instruction from king and council and this was to remain conspicuously lacking.

(1) Ibid.

(2) Moleyns left for England accompanied by Bluemantle pursuivant on 4 December 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.34^v).

(3) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, f.185; Bodleian Foreign Charters, 489, 490.

(4) Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 320. Somerset was later to receive criticism in England over the continued deadlock in the negotiations. One of the duke of York's articles referred to this: '... and also duryng the said trues made more strong and fortified diverse places disopered by youre commaundement, as Morteyn and Seint Jakes de Beveron, ageyn the appointment of the seid trues; uppon which youre uncle did sommon hym to make a-seeth and for to disimpaire the seid fortifying and wrong don agayn the trues, and in asmoche as non aseeth by hym was don, nor lefte not of his seid fortifying, caused your seid uncle to have, as he pretende, cause to breke the said trues on his parties; which brekyng of trues was oon of the verray cause of losse of Normandie' (The Paston Letters, I, 104-5).

Somerset responded to Charles VII on his own part detailing French violations of the truce, the seizure of Simon Morhier near Dieppe, the activities of the French garrison of Granville, and most seriously the activities of Pierre de Brézé (captain of Louviers) and Robert de Floques (captain of Evreux) around Vauvray where conditions were as of open war.⁽¹⁾ This last complaint reflected the vulnerability of the English position on the stretch of the Seine between Pont-de-l'Arche and Château-Gaillard, especially where the course of the river ran westwards in the direction of Louviers. The French occupied much of the countryside in this region and had garrisons at Louviers, Le Neubourg and Evreux. On several occasions raiding enemy troops had severely disrupted the flow of river traffic and had captured whole convoys of boats bearing merchandise.⁽²⁾ To counter these activities, Somerset had organised the construction of a bastide, a temporary fortification, at Vauvray, the area of the river closest to Louviers. Erection of the bastide was well underway by October 1448. Details of its construction were supervised by lord Fauconberg, who remained based at nearby Gaillard.⁽³⁾ Somerset organised a succession of boats from Rouen carrying supplies, construction equipment, soldiers and gunners.⁽⁴⁾ Progress was rapid and by 24 October a messenger noted that the bastide was providing some sort of protection for much of the river between Pont-de-l'Arche and Vauvray.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, I, 223 (Letter of Somerset to Charles VII, 28 February 1449).

(2) Ibid. Robert de Floques had on one occasion captured a wine convoy. Somerset had made representations to Floques and Brézé on a number of occasions when their activities had forced boats to turn back to Pont-de-l'Arche: BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.107^v (October 1448).

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6016, 6033.

(4) ADE, IIF(Fonds Danquin) 4068: Somerset ordering payment for mariners conveying to Vauvray 'grands bateaux, dits foucets, garnis et equipes de gens de guerre'.

(5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6016.

Somerset's herald 'Mortain' and the treasurer of his household arrived with extra money to pay the troops concentrated there.⁽¹⁾ Despite its rapid construction the bastide was only partially successful. The French were able to capture parts of the fortification and continue on occasions to seize ships and prevent river traffic from continuing along the Seine.⁽²⁾ These breaches of the truce on the French side were to continue unchecked. Indeed in April 1449 the captain of Evreux, Robert de Floques, came close to capturing Mantes further ~~up~~-river.⁽³⁾ They showed that the French too could be guilty of violating the truce when it suited their purposes and more alarmingly indicated the extreme vulnerability of the lower Seine to French attack.

These events were to be overshadowed by a far more dramatic incident when on the night of 23 March the English captured in a surprise attack the rich Breton wool town of Fougères. Since 1447 the English had been planning some sort of reprisal for the seizure of the duke's brother Gilles. The leader of this exploit was to be the captain François de Surienne, known as l'Aragonais, who had visited London in September 1447 to discuss the proposal to seize Fougères with both Suffolk and Somerset.⁽⁴⁾ Surienne, aware of the risks involved in such an enterprise, had insisted

(1) BN. Ms. Fr. 26078/6020.

(2) A messenger leaving Fauconberg at Gaillard was forced to travel to the bastide by land with the captain of the castle of nearby Longjumeau, 'les ennemis et adversaires empescheront le passage aux basteaux et navires mouvans et descendans par la riviere de Seine' (November 1448): BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6033.

(3) The town was saved from capture by the vigilance of the lieutenant, Thomas Saint-Barbe, who was given a special reward of 100 livres tournois for his good service by Somerset (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.24).

(4) A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 312-14.

on receiving written confirmation both that the attack was fully supported by the English government and that he would receive further reinforcements after the capture. Suffolk supplied Surienne with the necessary authentication; furthermore, the captain was showered with honours. He was created knight of the Garter, granted a pension and the castle of Porchester in Hampshire.⁽¹⁾

In the autumn of 1448 Somerset appointed Surienne to review troops in lower Normandy. It had been decided to gather the soldiers for the enterprise in the region around Surienne's captaincy at Verneuil, while scaling equipment was stored closer to their destination at Condé-sur-Noireau.⁽²⁾ By February 1449 all the preparations were ready. If the plan had the full backing of the English government it was nevertheless now Somerset's responsibility to execute the attack. A number of the Norman council privy to the plan expressed grave disquiet and tried to dissuade the governor, fearing the likelihood of war again breaking out if Fougères was captured.⁽³⁾ But after some hesitation, on 11 March Somerset despatched to Surienne at Longny the orders to proceed with the attack.⁽⁴⁾

Surienne, an experienced mercenary soldier and one of the ablest captains now in English service, had planned the whole operation with

(1) Ibid.

(2) Ibid., 317-18.

(3) This is shown from the testimony of Raoul Roussel, archbishop of Rouen, in the inquiry held by Jouvénal des Ursins, chancellor of France, Rouen, November-December 1449 (Quicherat, Histoire des règnes de Charles VII et de Louis XI, IV, 338-41).

(4) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.132^V.

great care. He had full knowledge of the strength of the town's garrison and the state of its defences. Marching westward he picked up the scaling ladders at Condé and had reached the vicinity of Avranches by 23 March. A fast night march brought his company to Fougères around midnight. The assault was a complete success with the surprised garrison offering little resistance. The town itself was heavily plundered with a haul of booty as high as 2 million écus d'or.⁽¹⁾

The capture and ransacking of Fougères took both Brittany and France completely by surprise. The pillage left in its wake many homeless families forced to flee from the town and caused a wave of outrage.⁽²⁾ Some of the plunder was distributed among Surienne's troops, while the rest was carried back into the Cotentin where it was shipped to England or carried on to Caen and Rouen.⁽³⁾ The duke of Brittany made an immediate protest to Somerset but the French delayed their reaction for over a month. Although Charles VII had sent an embassy to Rouen (7-22 April) to discuss other infringements of the truce, the matter of Fougères was not officially raised.⁽⁴⁾ Somerset gave the French ambassadors Guillaume Cousinot and Pierre de Fonteuil a generous reception, perhaps hoping that the affair might pass without a serious diplomatic breach.⁽⁵⁾ Charles VII had however been preparing his ground carefully. By the time of his first

(1) A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 323. The enormous sum of 2 million écus d'or, the estimated plunder from the town, was given by the French in the abortive discussions over compensation at Port-Saint-Ouen, June 1449 (Stevenson, Narratives of the Expulsion, 447).

(2) The accounts of Rennes show the town receiving many homeless families from Fougères after its capture by the English (J.P. Leguay, La ville de Rennes au quinzième siècle à travers les comptes des Miseurs, 317).

(3) Entries in the receiver-general's account of Normandy show large amounts of Breton money and gold being carried from Carentan to Caen in May 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.82-82^V).

(4) Beaucourt, Charles VII, 324-5.

(5) All the ambassadors' expenses were paid and they were presented with many gifts (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.46, 49, 49^V).

formal protest and demand for reparation on 13 May, full support had already been promised the Bretons.⁽¹⁾ Three days later (16 May) French troops and Breton partisans surprised and captured Pont-de-l'Arche taking prisoner Lord Fauconberg.⁽²⁾ Bishop Basin, present at a meeting of the Norman council when the news reached Somerset, described the duke's fury. More tellingly, the English were unable to undertake any major effort to regain the town, fearing a plot to deliver Rouen itself to the French.⁽³⁾

As both sides prepared for a last major conference at the end of June, Somerset maintained an equivocal diplomatic position. He claimed that the attack on Fougères had taken place without his knowledge and consent, though in reality he was in regular contact with Surienne.⁽⁴⁾ On the French side a formal alliance had been signed with Brittany (17 June) that promised a declaration of war if the matter of Fougères was not settled by the end of July.⁽⁵⁾

Negotiations reopened at Louviers on 15 June and continued at Port-Saint-Ouen, Venables and Bonport until 4 July. The English embassy stood by three main points. They repeated that Fougères had been taken without Somerset's consent. The matter could only be considered after

(1) Beaucourt, Charles VII, 325-6.

(2) Ibid., 328-9.

(3) Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, II, 82-8. The duke's anger is also mentioned by Blondel who tells how the duchess, fearing his wrath, hid her French doctor Jean Typhaine. The chronicler adds that fear of treachery in Rouen discouraged Somerset and Talbot from a major attempt to recapture the town (Blondel, 30-4). Blondel's account is impressive in its small points of detail. Typhaine had been specially summoned from Paris on the orders of Somerset in April 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.136).

(4) Somerset's herald 'Mortain' had been despatched to Surienne at Fougères on a number of occasions during May and June 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.70^v; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, f.191).

(5) Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 329-30.

Pont-de-l'Arche, Conches and Gerberoy (the latter two had also been recaptured by the French) had been handed back, Lord Fauconberg, Simon Morhier and significantly Gilles of Brittany were also to be released. If these conditions were met the English would instruct Surienne to hand over the town to conservateurs of the truce. On the vital question of compensation for the sack of Fougères, estimated at 2 million écus d'or, the English embassy procrastinated. Since Charles VII pretended to the allegiance of the duke of Brittany the matter could no longer be dealt with by their commission but had to be referred back to Henry VI.

The French reply was uncompromising. English troops captured in a raiding party from Fougères had admitted that the seizure had been carried out on the orders of Somerset. They reiterated that Fougères, belonging to the duke of Brittany, was under the sovereignty of the king of France. It was impossible to discuss the release of Fougères without the provision of adequate compensation. Furthermore the other grievances of the Bretons, the fortification of St.-James-de-Beuvron and Mortain, and the damage caused by raiding English troops in Brittany (estimated at 700,000 livres tournois) must also be dealt with.⁽¹⁾ The negotiations failed to achieve any progress on these points and their breakdown made war inevitable. On 17 July at Roches-Tranchelion in a full meeting of the French council, war against England was formally declared. On the same day Charles appointed Dunois lieutenant-général between the Somme and Oise.⁽²⁾

From the French side, Somerset took a large measure of the blame for the breakdown of the truce. His governorship had witnessed a series of

(1) The full text of these last important negotiations is printed in Stevenson, Narratives of the expulsion, 379-514.

(2) Beaucourt, Charles VII, IV, 330-1.

violations and prevaricating diplomacy.⁽¹⁾ Similar statements were to be expressed in England, by the war veteran Sir John Fastolf and by Richard duke of York.⁽²⁾ While Somerset was responsible for the provocative refortification of St -James-de-Beuvron and gave the orders for the capture of Fougères, they took place against the wider background of a muddled and confused foreign policy. By refusing to recognise the reality of the Franco-Breton alliance, Henry VI and his English council seriously compromised their diplomatic position for little worthwhile gain. The plan to seize Fougères was poorly thought out and proved to be a disastrous miscalculation. The insistence on resurrecting the English claim to sovereignty over Brittany was the fundamental reason for the breakdown of the truce; Somerset was a victim of that policy's uncertainty and lack of direction.

As war became more and more inevitable the crucial question now turned on the ability of the duchy to defend itself. Somerset had a fairly comprehensive picture of the state of Normandy's fortifications. Repairs to castles were carried out on his own inspection, as at Bayeux in September 1448, or on orders to the local vicomte or bailli.⁽³⁾ By

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- (1) See the statement made by Charles VII to Somerset's delegation (Jean Lenfant, Jean Cousin) when they were informed of the declaration of war on 31 July 1449: Stevenson, Letters and Papers, I, 243. The text observed that before the arrival of the duke of Somerset the truce had been reasonably well kept by both sides.
- (2) Fastolf was particularly critical of the sack of Fougères, demanding why a restitution was not made to the French and what became of the plunder, 'Questions to be put by the English council to the duke of Somerset...'; Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 718-20.
- (3) Repairs were made to the tower and other parts of the castle at Bayeux, for the arrival of Somerset in September 1448 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/5997). On the governor's instructions repairs were also made to the fortifications at Avranches (14 September 1448) and new cannon, including two bombardes, were manufactured for the town (BN, Ms. Fr. 26427, no. 206). In May 1449 he ordered local officials to supervise the urgent repair of one of the walls of the castle of Arques (BL, Add. Ch. 8037).

May 1449, as relations with the French steadily deteriorated, a number of towns received grants of money to improve their defences.⁽¹⁾ Along with such measures a watch was kept on troublesome areas by the use of mobile field retinues, such as forces sent to Gavray under Andrew Trollope and Pont-de-l'Arche under Richard Roos in February 1449.⁽²⁾ But by the time of the meeting of the estates in May 1449 the reorganisation of the French army and their superiority in artillery, combined with the poor general state of the duchy's fortresses, was causing Somerset considerable concern.

The English government was not uninformed of the needs of Normandy. An important delegation headed by the chancellor Thomas Hoo and the abbot of Gloucester had been despatched in November 1448 and there were many smaller deputations including a visit by the royal master of ordnance in Normandy, John Dawson, in April 1449.⁽³⁾ However the complaint of the estates summoned in May 1449 that they could no longer carry the burden of taxation and that substantial aid must be provided by England, followed by the French capture of Pont-de-l'Arche, caused Somerset to make an urgent and dramatic communication. It was drawn up in the form of a 'credence' to be delivered by the abbot of Gloucester to both houses of the

(1) Somerset promised the town of Mantes more money for its fortification and defence on 21 May 1449. 200 livres tournois were granted (9 June): Archives Communales de Mantes, BB 5, ff.21, 22^v. Further payments were made to Alençon (200 livres tournois) and Rouen (120 livres tournois) for the bourgeois of the town to improve defences in August-September 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.33-34).

(2) BL, Add. Ch. 8036; BN, Pièces Originales 2125 (1e Normand)/4.

(3) Shipping was arrested at Harfleur on 24 November 1448 for the passage to England of the chancellor Thomas Hoo and other councillors 'to report the great needs of the duchy of Normandy' (BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6035). Dawson was sent by Somerset to England on 1 April 1449 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.60^v). Such deputations were an important part of the liaison between England and Normandy; they continued to arrive in England up to the fall of Rouen.

parliament then sitting at Westminster.⁽¹⁾ It seems likely that it was despatched with the abbot on 17 May 1449, though the text itself is undated.⁽²⁾

Somerset's 'credence' made three basic points. The first was to draw attention to French breaches of the truce and the major reorganisation of the army by Charles VII which put it on an effective war footing.⁽³⁾ The second was a telling description of the overall state of Normandy's defences:

'... there is no place in the King's obeisance there purveyed, neither in reparations, ordinance nor in any manner artillery; but well nigh all places be in such ruin that though they were stuffed with men and ordinance they be so ruinous, that they be unable to be defended and kept. The which reparation and ordinance to be purveyed sufficiently will draw to inestimable costs.'

York was later to accuse Somerset of allowing castles to fall into disrepair but it seems that the problem had been worsening well before Edmund's governorship.⁽⁴⁾ Somerset added that the Norman estates were no longer willing to bear the present level of taxation and were demanding a reduction of garrison troops. The 'credence' ended with a general appeal for a new allocation of funds:

(1) 'Credence by my lord of Somerset...', RP, V, 147.

(2) Somerset granted 300 livres tournois to the abbot of Gloucester as a salary for the journey he was to undertake to England (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.62).

(3) The major reforms initiated by Charles VII since 1444 included the formation of the francs archers which became the basis of a new, more professional, army.

(4) The Paston Letters, I, 105. See also Fastolf's criticism, Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 720. However the document evidence does not support these charges of undue negligence; it seems that Somerset was making what provision he could in a difficult situation.

'... calling to mind the great, inestimable and well nigh infinite costs and effusions both of goods and blood, that this land hath born and suffered for that land's sake. Whereof the shameful loss (the which God ever defend) shall not only be the irreparable hurt of the common profit, but also an everlasting spite and perpetual derogation in the fame and renown of this noble realm.'

Despite the clarity of this warning, the commons made no provision for the defence of Normandy. The lords too seemed to regard the maintenance of law and order in England a greater priority than any aid to Lancastrian France.⁽¹⁾ This failure to provide any meaningful financial contribution critically handicapped attempts to send a major relief force to the duchy's aid. The government had to resort to a series of loans, principally from members of the council. Shortage of money delayed for several months Kyriell's vital reinforcements; though most of Somerset's war-time salary of £20,000 was eventually raised by one means or another.⁽²⁾

Faced with the news of the capture of Pont-de-l'Arche, the English council organised a modest contribution to the defence of the duchy. On 27 May 1449 Somerset's indenture as lieutenant-general was revised in view of the French aggression and the imminent danger of war. He was to be provided with an additional force of 100 men-at-arms and 1,200 archers, to be paid for the next quarter. They were to be mustered at Portsmouth on 11 June and to be shipped to Normandy before the end of the month.⁽³⁾ Recruitment of this retinue was organised by the experienced captain and

(1) A. Myers, 'A parliamentary debate of the mid-fifteenth century', BJRL, XXII (1938), 402-4.

(2) In all over £18,000 was paid. See Appendix 3.

(3) PRO, E101/71/4/923.

master of Somerset's household, Sir William Peyto, who had crossed over from Normandy in April.⁽¹⁾ Peyto found difficulty in raising the required number of men and after some delay it was less than half the proposed strength, only 55 men-at-arms and 408 archers, who finally mustered at Winchelsea on 31 July.⁽²⁾ On France's declaration of war plans were underway to recruit a more substantial army. Throughout September indentures were being drawn up with a number of individual captains. Despite a lack of aristocratic participation, a force of some 3,400 men was eventually contracted under the leadership of the veteran Sir Thomas Kyriell.⁽³⁾ However problems over the payment of the troops were to delay the embarkation of the army till the spring of 1450. In the interim Somerset was left to look to his own resources.

After the capture of Pont-de-l'Arche, the situation in eastern Normandy had grown increasingly precarious. A series of religious processions ordered by Somerset in Rouen for the peace of the realm signified the mood of uneasiness.⁽⁴⁾ There were very real fears that the French might attempt another surprise attack to isolate Rouen still further.

(1) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.61^v.

(2) PRO, E101/54/11 (the muster roll of the army).

(3) A series of indentures had been drawn up with individual captains by 24 September 1449 for them and their retinues to muster on 22 October. Earlier plans for the despatch of an army under Lord Powys, Robert Vere and William Zouche had not materialised; though it seems that Vere himself and a small retinue (100 men-at-arms and 300 archers) did ship over to western Normandy in late September (PRO, E404/65/225; /66/12-22). However the commander of the main force, Thomas Kyriell, did not indent until 4 December. The army was to remain on the south coast for another three months until the second quarter's wages were finally paid on 9 March 1450 (PRO, E404/66/92; E403/777). The delay before a leader was found for the army, followed by the difficulties in raising wages for the troops, prevented the arrival of these more substantial reinforcements during the crucial first few months of the war.

(4) ADSM, G 2131, f.258 (12 May 1449), f.262^v (4 June), f.268 (27 June).

Pont-Audemer, astride the capital's communications with Caen and lower Normandy, was a likely target. At the beginning of June a substantial field force under Talbot and Osbert Mundeford was despatched to the town, shortly followed by an artillery train.⁽¹⁾ Talbot and Mundeford (who had been appointed captain of nearby Pont-l'Evêque) toured the area over the next two weeks, visiting Bernay and Lisieux, in a show of force designed to discourage an enemy attack.⁽²⁾

The breakdown of negotiations at the beginning of July meant the outbreak of hostilities was imminent. Somerset was left trying to anticipate where in eastern Normandy the French would strike first. On 2 July Talbot and Mundeford were sent on another two-week tour to cover Vernon and Mantes.⁽³⁾ A number of last minute repairs were made to the castles of Gisors, Gaillard, Vernon and the tour grise at Verneuil and extra provisions were purchased.⁽⁴⁾ Armed boats were put on patrol on the Seine.⁽⁵⁾ In Rouen itself a steady stream of munitions and supplies were being stockpiled in the palace and castle and repairs and alterations to the town's defences were constantly in progress during June and July.⁽⁶⁾ While all these preparations were being made, war had already opened on the Breton marches, where Breton troops had entered Normandy at the end of

(1) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.12-12^v. Ordnance and artillery under William Hitching was sent to the town (9 June).

(2) There is a muster of Mundeford's retinue (2 men-at-arms, 22 archers) in BN, Ms. Fr. 25778/1836 (23 June 1449).

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.76-76^v.

(4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, f.201.

(5) Ibid., 74, f.253.

(6) Ibid., 28, f.195.

June and recovered St - James-de-Beuvron.⁽¹⁾ Fearing a major attack in the east, the Norman government were powerless to resist this incursion and were unable to send any reinforcements to the Cotentin in the months that followed.

On 20 July the first blow came at Verneuil where the forces of Dunois and Brézé broke into the town with the help of some of the inhabitants.⁽²⁾ A messenger had reached Somerset with the news the same day, telling that the garrison had retreated into the citadel. On 21 July fresh news arrived at Rouen; the citadel had been stormed but the garrison was still holding out in the tour grise.⁽³⁾ Somerset's response was swift. Another messenger was despatched promising that a relief force would be sent immediately. Horses were hurriedly commandeered and a detachment of troops under Talbot and Mundeford left for Verneuil the same day (21 July).⁽⁴⁾ The relief army had reached Breteuil, several miles to the north of the town, on 31 July, but instead of proceeding to attack Dunois at Verneuil suddenly swung back north without engaging him. They were promptly followed by Dunois and his army and the two sides took up battle array at Harcourt (2 August). However, Talbot, after siting his troops on a strong natural position, fortified by artillery, which prevented an immediate French attack, made a hurried dash back to Rouen which he reached on 4 August.⁽⁵⁾

(1) A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 339.

(2) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V. 5.

(3) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.259.

(4) Ibid.; BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.76^V.

(5) An accurate account of these events is given in a letter of Guillaume Cousinot to Gaston comte de Foix, printed in Bonnin, Cartulaire de Louviers, II, 247.

A number of explanations have been suggested for this ineffective effort which was certainly out of character as far as Talbot was concerned. It is possible that the English underestimated the strength of the army under Dunois (around 2,500 men) and did not want to risk an engagement, but it is more likely that Talbot was ordered to return to Rouen as fast as possible as a new army under the counts of Eu and St -Pol had made a daring attempt on the town.⁽¹⁾ These troops (with a strength of 300 lances and 1,500 archers) had gathered at Beauvais at the end of July and had made a surprise march on Rouen itself, counting on help from collaborators inside the city.⁽²⁾ The return of Talbot's army forestalled this attempt but the French captured and burnt the castle of Logempré before falling back to Pont-St.-Pierre.⁽³⁾

The French now had two armies able to operate unopposed in eastern Normandy. Breton and French troops had invaded the Cotentin while partisans under the duke of Alençon had entered lower Normandy. Furthermore the duke of Brittany was preparing to enter the field himself with a much larger army. With this worsening situation, Somerset summoned early in August at Rouen an emergency meeting of financial officials and captains to discuss means of continuing to provide payment for the troops and defence for the towns.⁽⁴⁾ A proposal by the governor to demolish the fortress of Pont-Audemer which was not defended by proper walls but only

(1) A. Bossuat, François de Surienne, 341; J. Lesquier, 'La Reddition de 1449', Études Lexoviennes, I, 21.

(2) J. Lesquier, loc.cit., 21.

(3) Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, I, 190.

(4) This meeting is described in Blondel, 69-70.

by a palisade was countered by the captain of Caudebec, Fulkes Eyton. Eyton felt that the protection afforded by the river Rille and deep ditches made the town defensible if a sufficient force could be provided. His counsel was adopted and on 6 August a company of some 500 troops left for Pont-Audemer under Eyton and Mundeford.⁽¹⁾

This timely use of reinforcements anticipated the French plan of campaign. Their two armies under Eu and St -Pol and Dunois had re-united at Pont-de-l'Arche on 8 August. Pont-Audemer was to be the target of their next attack. Strategically situated on the routes from Caen to Rouen via Pont-l'Evêque and Lisieux, its capture would block any aid to the city, of men or supplies, from lower Normandy.⁽²⁾ Ignorant of the fresh troops in the town, a first detachment under Pierre de Brézé and Robert Floques (which had reached Pont-Audemer on 10 August) made an assault on the walls which was comfortably beaten off. The full French contingents now assembled for a regular investment. The counts of Eu and St. Pol took up position on the westward side of the town, towards Caen, Dunois on the eastern side. A fire started in the town spread rapidly, distracting the defenders and the French assault broke through the palisades (12 August) capturing both Eyton and Mundeford.⁽³⁾

The English position was seriously weakened by this unfortunate blow. With the main centre of resistance defeated, Eu and St. Pol marched on

(1) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.77

(2) Blondel, 70.

(3) Mundeford's own account of the loss of the town to the French (made during his captivity) is printed in Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III, 354-8.

Pont-l'Evêque, Dunois and a larger force on Lisieux. Both towns quickly surrendered, Bishop Basin negotiating a composition with the French commanders at Lisieux.⁽¹⁾ In a council of war, Dunois and his captains decided to avoid the major garrisons of western Normandy such as Caen and Falaise. Instead the remaining garrisons in eastern Normandy were to be reduced systematically before a general advance on Rouen.⁽²⁾

In Rouen itself the situation was growing increasingly serious. On hearing of the loss of Pont-Audemer, Somerset had urgently despatched a messenger with instructions for the captains of Lisieux, Pont-l'Evêque and Touques. The messenger arrived only to find both Pont-l'Evêque and Lisieux in enemy hands, while the captain of Touques sent him at once to Honfleur to bring back urgently needed reinforcements.⁽³⁾ Events were moving too fast for Somerset to anticipate and he was having less and less control over them. His anxiety was revealed in a stream of messages to and from Caudebec inquiring as to the strength of the enemy and their intentions. A new attack was feared and the garrison requested more troops and artillery.⁽⁴⁾ A party of men from the town reported to Somerset at Rouen a spying mission they had carried out on Pont-Audemer. A woman had been given a bribe of wine to go into the town where she had managed to speak to the captive captain Fulkes Eyton. Eyton had warned the garrison of Caudebec to be on their guard as certain members of the town were plotting with the enemy.⁽⁵⁾

(1) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 6-7; J. Lesquier, loc.cit., 24-32, citing the records of the town (Archives Communales de Lisieux); Basin, Histoire de Charles VII, II, 96-104.

(2) This was the counsel given by Bishop Basin to the French captains, ibid., 105-110.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26079/6146 (the messenger was sent from Rouen 13 August 1449).

(4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 16, f.321.

(5) Ibid., f.325.

However, the immediate danger to Caudebec passed as the army of Dunois moved south to lay siege to Mantes. The dilemma facing the inhabitants of Mantes, well-documented through the surviving town records, was similar to Lisieux and other towns where the citizens arranged compositions with the enemy. A meeting of the town assembly on 20 August 1449 discussed the news that Charles VII was at Chartres with a large number of troops and that a considerable siege train was being prepared at Paris in readiness for an assault on the town. Messengers were sent to Chartres and Paris to check the truth of these reports and also to Somerset at Rouen to warn him of the danger.⁽¹⁾ Dunois' soldiers arrived outside Mantes on 24 August and a day later an emergency meeting of the full town assembly was called. Not only had the French army arrived unopposed, but news had also come of boats gathered at Paris laden with engines of war in readiness for a bombardment. The inhabitants decided that as no help had been received from the English they would make a composition with the French as soon as the guns arrived to avoid serious damage to the town.⁽²⁾ The next day (26 August) such an agreement was negotiated with the French and accepted by the lieutenant Thomas Saint-Barbe and the English garrison.⁽³⁾ The surrender of Vernon to the army of Dunois quickly followed, the garrison agreeing to a composition again because no English relief force had arrived.⁽⁴⁾

(1) Archives Communales de Mantes, BB 5, f.27.

(2) Ibid., BB 5, ff.27^v-28.

(3) Ibid., BB 5, f.29. The text of the treaty is in Chronique de Charles VII Roi de France par Jean Chartier, ed. V. de Viriville (Paris, 1858, 3 vols), II, 97-101.

(4) Again details are in the letter of Guillaume Cousinot to the comte de Foix (Bonniau, op.cit., II, 249). The chronicler Robert Blondel was critical of the English failure to provide a relief force to aid this strong and well defended castle (Blondel, 89-91). The terms of this and other compositions allowed the English garrisons to return to Rouen.

The failure of Somerset to take an army into the field allowed a rapid erosion of the English position. Despite the risks involved in leaving Rouen an active defence was the only hope for holding off the French. But the danger and uncertainty of such a course seem to have sapped Somerset's confidence and resolution. Overwhelmed by the difficulties of the situation, he remained at Rouen with the majority of his troops, leaving many towns and fortresses to their own resources. Perhaps nothing better could have been done, but contemporary opinion in both France and England felt that this course had lacked courage and was even dishonourable. Such an accusation was made by Richard duke of York in his articles against Beaufort:

'... the Duc of Somerset wold yeve noo counseile, aide ne helpe unto the capitains of diverse stronge places and garnisons which at that tyme, constreyned by nede, desired of hym provision and relief for abillement of werre to resiste the malice of their enemyes daily makynge fressh feetes of werre uppon theym; he geving theym noone aide nor help, but lete theym contynue in their malice, howe be it that diverse places were lost before: and what tyme that the said places were beseged and sent for help and socour unto hym he wold graunte no maner of conforte, but suffred hem appoint and compoude with here enemyes as well as they myght for their ease and suretee, makynge no maner of provision for the kepyng of the places which remayned;' (1)

Such criticism was echoed, albeit in different form, in some of the French chronicles.⁽²⁾ Perhaps the most interesting comment was from Jean de Bueil writing some years later in his Le Jouvencel, a semi-fictional work drawn from the author's own experience in the campaigns at the end of the Hundred Years War. In a section discussing military occupation of foreign countries Bueil mentioned how easily the reconquest of Normandy had been effected by Charles VII. He then made a direct reference to Somerset's

(1) The Paston Letters, 105.

(2) Blondel, 89-91.

failure to come to combat with the French armies:

'Et s'il fust sailly aux champs des le commencement au devant du roy de France, il avoit bien puissance de lui donner la bataille; et, s'il eust peu resister contre lui, le payz n'eust ose dire mot. Ainsi il eust sauve et garde son payz. Et, s'il eust este desconfit en bataille, au moings l'eust-il perdu plus honnestement qu'il ne fist et n'eust pas eu pire qu'il eust.' (1)

Charles VII, who had made a triumphant royal entry into Normandy via Verneuil and Evreux, now set up his headquarters at Louviers, where, at the end of August, a new council of war was held. It was decided that the two armies should again separate, the counts of Eu and St - Pol to operate in the Pays de Caux, Dunois on the left bank of the Seine. Gournay and Neufchâtel fell to the former while Dunois captured Harcourt (14 September), Chambrais (20 September), Exmes and finally Argentan. At the end of the month, the siege of Gaillard was opened under the direction of Charles himself.⁽²⁾ Meanwhile in the west, the duke of Brittany had crossed into Normandy with a large army early in September, and by October Coutances, Saint-Lô, Torigni and Carentan had fallen to his troops. Partisans of the duke of Alençon had made further gains, capturing Essay and Alençon itself.⁽³⁾

The situation of Rouen had now become desperate. Communications were still open along the lower reaches of the Seine to Honfleur and Harfleur, but there was no sign of any help from England.⁽⁴⁾ The town prepared itself for the inevitable siege. Somerset ordered all river traffic between Rouen and Caudebec to be escorted back to the city.⁽⁵⁾ The mariners of

(1) Jean de Bueil, Le Jouvencel, ed. C. Favre, L. Lecestre (Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1887-9, 2 vols), II, 148.

(2) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 8, 12.

(3) Ibid., 8-11.

(4) A convoy of barges had been sent from Rouen to Harfleur and back early in September, probably to pick up supplies (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, f.203).

(5) Ibid., f.205.

the duke's barge carried out a regular night watch.⁽¹⁾ More and more soldiers streamed into the city from defeated garrisons. A large number of temporary beds had to be constructed for those newly-arrived troops now lodged on the towers and gates.⁽²⁾ After the disaster at Pont-Audemer those soldiers that had managed to return to Rouen were sent on by Somerset to reinforce Gisors. Troops of the duke's own personal retinue were also despatched to strengthen Gaillard.⁽³⁾ Assisting these two castles, both strongly sited and fortified, offered some chance of holding up the enemy advance. But the French encirclement continued remorselessly. On 20 September Somerset heard news from Caudebec that the enemy were expected there very soon. On 1 October a message reached him that the town was under siege, asking whether a relief force would be sent or should a composition be arranged.⁽⁴⁾ The investment of Caudebec meant that Rouen was now completely isolated. All that Somerset could do was to carry stores to the fortified abbey of Ste. Catherine's to the east of the city and to the palace and the castle and to make necessary last minute repairs. Ditches were deepened, walls strengthened, arms and ordnance were stockpiled along with wheat, beef, salt, wine and other provisions during September.⁽⁵⁾ Cut off from any support, Somerset was forced to treat with the local money-lender to raise cash for his troops.⁽⁶⁾

(1) Ibid., 74, f.259.

(2) Ibid., 28, f.205.

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.5^v, 11.

(4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 16, f.323.

(5) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, ff.52-54^v; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, ff,205, 207.

(6) M. Mollat, Le Commerce Maritime Normand, 48.

By the beginning of October the armies of Dunois, the counts of Eu and St. Pol and the duke of Alençon were converging on Rouen. Charles VII and his retinue moved in readiness from Louviers to Pont-de-l'Arche on 6 October. The French had a number of contacts in the town and knew that a large proportion of the inhabitants were disaffected.⁽¹⁾ Hoping to encourage a reaction from the citizens, Dunois' troops appeared outside the walls on 9 October, but lack of supplies and torrential rain drove them back after two days. Still hoping to avoid an assault on the town, the French, with the aid of sympathisers inside the town, made a new attempt (16 October). A plan was formed for the section of the walls by the St. Hilaire gate to be delivered by those undertaking the night watch. French troops were already on the wall when the ruse came to the knowledge of Talbot who, leading a vigorous counter-attack, recovered the gate and drove the enemy off with some loss.⁽²⁾

On the same day the bourgeois of the town resolved to open negotiations with the French. Somerset seems to have acceded to this and sent two of his own representatives, John Hanford and John Dawson, to accompany the fifty-strong delegation headed by the archbishop of Rouen. At a conference with Dunois and the French chancellor Jouvénel des Ursins at Port-Saint-Ouen on 18 October the townspeople offered to surrender the city to Charles VII if all its traditional privileges and customs were reconfirmed. The English garrison were to be given freedom to depart with all their goods and artillery. Surprised by this composition, Somerset refused to

(1) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 12-13.

(2) Ibid., 14.

accept the terms, but events were to move too fast for him. On 19 October a major rising occurred in the town. The English were driven to the three main fortresses, the castle, the palace and the barbican on the bridge and French troops entered Rouen.⁽¹⁾

Somerset's position was now hopeless. On 20 October he was forced to abandon the barbican. A detachment under Dunois took up position before the palace, Brézé before the castle, and artillery was brought up. On 22 October, the bombardment commenced. A day later Somerset opened negotiations for surrender.⁽²⁾ Meeting Charles VII and his retinue, who were installed in the abbey of St. Catherine's just outside the city, he attempted to fall back on the abortive agreement of Port-Saint-Ouen but with no success. The French were now in a position to dictate terms. On 24 October Charles and Dunois made a new offer. Somerset and Talbot would remain prisoners of the king, along with twenty others, while the rest of the garrison would be given safe-conduct to leave Normandy provided they took an oath never to return to France. If this was not acceptable to the English an alternative proposal was provided. Both Somerset and Talbot would be allowed to leave for England with the rest of the garrison if the towns of Harfleur, Honfleur, Caudebec, Montivilliers and Tancarville were surrendered.⁽³⁾

(1) A. Chéruef, Histoire de Rouen sous la Domination Anglaise, 124-8.

(2) This token resistance may have been made by Somerset to avoid charges of a treasonable surrender (Chéruef, op.cit., 129). The English position, isolated with no chance of help arriving and lacking provisions for a long siege, was anyway desperate (Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, I, 225). The chroniclers describe Somerset's preliminary offer of surrender as before the opening of the bombardment but the records of the negotiations (which survive in transcript form in a book of extracts of the registers of the Hôtel de Ville, Bibliothèque Municipale de Rouen, Ms. Y 134, 12-25, of which the text has been fully printed by A. Pottier, 'Réduction de la ville de Rouen en 1449', Revue Rétrospective Normande, III, 1842, 3-41) establish that in fact it took place on 23 October, the day after the bombardment commenced (Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 17).

(3) A. Pottier, loc.cit. 3-10.

It was evident that the English position was so desperate that they would have to make major concessions. On 25 October Somerset returned with a revised offer. They would be prepared to give up Honfleur, Caudebec, Arques and Tancarville. The omission of Harfleur was very important as the retention of this major port allowed a chance of a counter-offensive in eastern Normandy once reinforcements from England arrived. In return for these surrenders both Somerset and Talbot and their army would be allowed to leave Rouen, either for England or another part of Normandy. Prisoners would be returned to the French but no repayment was to be made to the French and there was to be no settlement of the debts contracted to the people of Rouen. These new proposals were in turn rejected by the French but by 29 October a treaty of surrender had at least been hammered out.⁽¹⁾ Making further compromises on their terms of 25 October, the English promised also to surrender the town of Montivilliers and to pay to Charles and his commissioners 50,000 écus d'or, as well as settling local debts. Moreover a substantial number of hostages were to be left as a guarantee of the agreement, headed by Lord Talbot. Somerset, according to a number of chroniclers had tried desperately to avoid leaving his principal captain but was finally left with no alternative.⁽²⁾ Along with Talbot, Henry Redford and Richard Frogenhall were held as surety for the delivery of all the towns within fifteen days; Sir John Butler,

(1) The extracts printed by A. Pottier terminate on 26 October. The full text of the treaty of surrender of 29 October is printed in Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III, 358-64, from two contemporary copies (BN, Ms. Fr. 4054, f.158; Ms. Fr. 5909, f.175^v) and is a more accurate version than the text printed by Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 607-17, from William of Worcester's collection, which omits a number of the articles.

(2) Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, III, 358-64. According to the Berry herald, the reluctance of the English side to surrender Talbot as hostage was one of the principal reasons for the length of negotiations (Berry, 'Le Recouvrement de Normandie', in Stevenson, Narratives of the expulsion, 306).

Richard Roos, Richard Gower and the son of Lord Abergavenny were kept as guarantee of payment of the 50,000 écus d'or.⁽¹⁾ In return the English were able to retain Harfleur and Somerset and the rest of the garrison were able to leave for the port on 4 November from where they sailed to Caen.⁽²⁾

The news of the surrender of Rouen came as a great shock in England.⁽³⁾ Combined with the lack of general resistance the composition negotiated by Somerset, surrendering further castles in the Pays de Caux, was seen by many as shameful, even treasonable. York, who had still held the captaincy of Rouen during Somerset's governorship, was especially critical of his rival's actions:

'... insomuch that he made non ordinaunce nor provision for the town, castell, and places of Rouen, neither of men, stuffe ne vitaille, the knowlage that he had of youre enemyes comyng thereunto notwith stondyng, yevyng licence unto the Archiebisshopp, chanons and burgeys of the same toun for to goo or sende to compoude with youre enemyes for the deliveraunce of the same...'

Such conduct, York continued,

'... was plainly ayeinst his promys, feith and liegeaunce that he of right oweth unto you, and ayeinst the tenure of the endentures made betwix youre highnes and hym of the charge of that londe, the which licence, and it had not ben don, the seid toun had abiden undre youre obeisaunce, the losse of whiche was a verray cause of the perdition of Normandie,'

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- (1) The English retention of Honfleur and their failure to pay the 50,000 écus d'or, meant that all the hostages remained in captivity. Talbot's release was secured as part of the terms of surrender of his captaincy of Falaise in July 1450. Similarly Richard Gower was released as part of the agreement to surrender Cherbourg in August 1450 (Berry, 'Le Recouvrement de Normandie', 362, 367).
- (2) Blondel, 153. Thomas Hoo and Fulkes Eyton were charged to effect the surrender of the towns stated in the treaty within two weeks.
- (3) An embassy from Rouen (presumably putting the case for the urgency of reinforcements) was in London when news of the town's capture arrived: 'Annales', printed in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 765; Giles, iv, 37.

The composition itself was also drawn attention to:

'... the said Duc of Somerset, for to colour his defautes and wilfull purpos in the premisses, entred in to your palaice of Rouen not vitailed nor fornished for defence, where he myght savely absentid hym, and yeldid up the saie Palaice and Castell, and moreover other good tounes, castels and fortresses, as Caudebek, and other diverse, as Tancarville, Moustrevillers, Arques, key of all Caulx, not beseged nor in perell at that tyme, for the enlargisshyng and deliveraunce of hym, his childre and goodes; which myght not, nor hath not, be done nor seen by lawe, resoun or cronikel, or by course of any leftenant, all though that he had be prisoner: Witnesses the Duc of Orliaunce, the Duc of Burbon, the duke of Alansum and others for whom was none delyvered, al though they had many strong places of theire owen. And furthermore fore the suertee of delyveraunce of tounes, castell and fortresses which were wel furnysshed for to have resisted your enemyes and to have biden within your obeisaunce, delyvered in ostage the Erle of Shrowesbury, that tyne Mareschall of Fraunce, and other notable persones which shuld have defended your lande there ayens the malice of your enemyes; and in likewyse appointed to delyver Hunflu, which was in noo gret perill, be had be that it was retardyed by youre lettres and so by that fraudelent and inordinat meane all was lost and yolden up...'. (1)

This long complaint was one of the most important articles against Somerset, for it intimated not only that his conduct had been negligent and dishonourable but was actually treasonable. It was because of this that York felt justified in continuing to demand the imprisonment and trial of his rival. To surrender a town without siege was a treasonable offence if there was opportunity for reasonable defence. French chroniclers suggest that at the time of the surrender of Rouen Somerset feared such a charge might be made and allowed a token bombardment of castle and palace before opening negotiations.⁽²⁾ In the event the English position was completely hopeless. Even during York's protectorate when he secured his rival's imprisonment, the charges of premature surrender never progressed further than a submission by the duke of

(1) The Paston Letters, I, 105-6.

(2) A. Chéruef, Histoire de Rouen, 129, citing a Norman chronicle account.

Norfolk reiterating the accusations to the English council.⁽¹⁾ But although Somerset was never put on trial and Henry VI retained his trust in him, his reputation and standing were irreparably damaged by these events.

The sense of anger at the surrender of fortresses in the composition at Rouen was felt in Normandy as well as in England; indeed the captain at Honfleur, Richard Curson, refused to obey the orders.⁽²⁾ But the English outposts in eastern Normandy were to receive little effective help that winter.⁽³⁾ In January angry troops under Cuthbert Colville, one of the captains of Kyriell's army, faced with further delays over their wages, murdered the royal paymaster Adam Moleyns at Portsmouth. Further incidents of violence and lawlessness continued on the south coast until the army at last embarked for France early in March.⁽⁴⁾

Meanwhile Charles VII's troops carried the campaign on into the middle of winter to prevent an English relief force returning to eastern Normandy. The siege of Harfleur commenced on 6 December and despite difficult weather the town was forced to surrender at the end of the month; a

(1) Norfolk's accusations are discussed in M. Keen, Laws of War, 46-7, 124.

(2) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 25.

(3) Barley, malt and wheat were sent to Honfleur and Harfleur in December 1449 (PRO, E404/66/95). No reinforcements, either of men or ordnance seems to have reached the towns; a force of soldiers under John Dawson being prepared for the aid of Harfleur never reached its destination (PRO, E403/777). The lack of any effective help from England greatly aided the French plan of campaign (Chronique de Mathieu d'Escouchy, I, 195-6).

(4) Reports of the disorder caused by these troops are borne out by the Southampton town accounts, which include a number of references to the damage caused by the soldiers including the storming of the prison at Bargate in February 1450: Southampton Record Office, SC5/1/7 (Steward's account book 1449-50), f.8^v. The army's second quarter's wages had finally been paid on 9 March 1450 (PRO, E403/777).

remarkable testament to the effectiveness of the French artillery.⁽¹⁾ Honfleur held out until 18 February hoping for help from England before it too surrendered. With the successful campaign of the Bretons having reduced almost the whole of the Cotentin the English presence in Normandy was now reduced to Cherbourg and key fortresses and towns in lower Normandy, Caen itself, Bayeux, Vire, Domfront and Falaise.

Kyriell's army finally reached Cherbourg on 15 March. Richemont was slow to react to the English force, but rather than head for Caen Kyriell first decided to lay siege to Valognes. There were sound reasons for this decision, since the town isolated Cherbourg and would hamper the army's advance. However, the plan allowed the French commanders to converge on the army before it was able to reach Somerset. On hearing of Kyriell's decision, the governor gathered substantial reinforcements from the garrisons of Caen, Bayeux and Vire, under the captains Mathew Gough, Robert Vere and Henry Norbury (around 2,000 men) to strengthen the army. Bombardes and heavy artillery were carried up from Cherbourg and Valognes had finally surrendered by 12 April.⁽²⁾

Charles VII despatched troops under the count of Clermont to meet this new threat. His army overtook Kyriell at the village of Formigny on the road from Carentan to Bayeux on 15 April. The English force was at a strength of around 5,000 men, the French somewhat less at

(1) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 25-6.

(2) Blondel, 171-77. Blondel's account provides the fullest detail on the events leading up to Formigny and on the battle itself. Some useful detail is also provided in M. d'Autume, Cherbourg pendant la Guerre de Cent Ans, 50.

3-4,000. The combat was decided by the sudden arrival of Richemont's troops which turned the English position. The results were disastrous. Kyriell and Norbury were captured along with many captains with casualties of over 3,000. Gough and Vere managed to escape the rejoin their garrisons.⁽¹⁾

The disaster at Formigy sealed the fate of the remaining English in Normandy. Vire surrendered soon after the battle, Bayeux after a stiffer siege on 16 May.⁽²⁾ With French troops now massing for the siege of Caen, Somerset was left to make last minute preparations for the forthcoming assault. The ramparts of the town were strengthened and part of the abbey of St. Etienne was demolished to avoid it sheltering an enemy attack on the wall.⁽³⁾ Horses, carts and supplies were requisitioned for the garrison from the surrounding area.⁽⁴⁾ By 5 June the French forces had assembled under the direction of Charles VII himself.

The investment was carried out on three sides of the city. A detachment under Dunois occupied the suburb of Vaucelles, Richemont and the count of Clermont the abbey of St. Etienne, and the counts of Eu and Nevers the abbaye aux Dames. The French army totalled 6-7,000 men; inside Caen were assembled under Somerset around 3,000 soldiers. After some fierce fighting the French captured the bastille at Vaucelles; their

(1) Blondel, 177-92; Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 31-34.

(2) Beaucourt, Charles VII, V, 35-6.

(3) V. Hunger, Le Siège et la Prise de Caen par Charles VII en 1450 (Paris, 1912), 35.

(4) A petition of the abbey of St. Etienne in 1451 refers to losses suffered from the English at the time of the siege of Caen when all their horses and carts were requisitioned by the occupying troops: ADC, F(Fonds Danquin), 1351 .

artillery was brought up closer to the walls, which under the force of the bombardment were breached in several places.⁽¹⁾ Now orders for an assault could be given but Charles was hoping to avoid the loss of life and considerable damage this would cause. Somerset was given a chance to negotiate a composition and on 24 June an agreement was reached that the English would evacuate the town by 1 July unless any help came in the interim.⁽²⁾ Somerset's decision to negotiate was again the subject of criticism from some quarters, though militarily there was little hope for the English position.⁽³⁾

Charles VII made his state entry into Caen on 6 July. Meanwhile Richemont escorted Somerset and his troops to the port of Ouistreham where he embarked for England around the middle of July.⁽⁴⁾ On 1 August the duke had reached London with many of the soldiers in his train in pitiful condition, destitute and reduced to poverty and petty theft.⁽⁵⁾ Such was the remnant of the English occupation of Normandy.

The few remaining Norman fortresses in English hands rapidly surrendered. Domfront and Falaise were in French hands by the end of July, Cherbourg, after a siege of a month finally capitulated on 12

(1) V. Hunger, Le Siège de Caen, 56-7.

(2) A transcript of the composition survives, AN,K68/45 (a copy of a later vidimus made in 1480). It was negotiated between Somerset and Dunois.

(3) According to the account in one English chronicle, the lieutenant of the town refused to abide by the composition, claiming the agreement could not be made without the consent of York, who still held the captaincy of Caen. The news of the surrender was conveyed to York in Ireland, 'which thing kindled so great a rancour in his harte and stomack, that he never left persecuting of the Duke of Somerset...' Hall's Chronicle, 216.

(4) It is very unlikely that Somerset returned to Calais before embarking for England (E. Cosneau, Le Connétable de Richemont, 420).

(5) Six town chronicles. ed. R. Flenley, 134.

August. Normandy had fallen to the armies of Charles VII in little over a year.

The man who had been entrusted with the defence of English-held France was taking his seat on the English council by the middle of August.⁽¹⁾ Henry VI retained a complete trust in Somerset's abilities. He was created constable of England and helped deal with continued disturbances in Kent in September and October 1450.⁽²⁾ York, who had returned from Ireland demanding a general reform of the government of the realm, at first made no direct attack on his rival. But Somerset's dominant role both in domestic and foreign policy (he was appointed to the captaincy of Calais and took over much of the responsibility for the defence of Gascony) antagonised York's sense of grievance further.⁽³⁾ Resorting to force of arms in 1452, he presented to the king at Dartford a long list of complaints against Somerset, that centred on his conduct as governor of Normandy.

York's own belief that Somerset's own '... inordinate negligence, lacchesse and wilfull rechelessness and insaciate covetyse ...' was a principal cause of the loss of the duchy had much sympathy at the time. Somerset was an extremely unpopular figure after his return from France.

(1) R. Storey, The End of the House of Lancaster, 75.

(2) Somerset was appointed constable of England on 11 September 1450 (Rymer, XI, 276). The duke's tour of justice in Kent in September and October resulted in the arrest of many rebels (R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 648).

(3) The appointment of Somerset as captain of Calais on 21 September 1451 (Calendar of French Rolls, 389) clearly antagonised York, and one of his articles in 1452 charged that his rival '... knowyng and understondyng well the grete murmur and sclaunder which daily rennyth agayn hym for the losse and sale, as it is surmyttid, of Normandie ...' was completely unsuitable for the post (The Paston Letters, I, 106). For a full discussion of the subject see G.L. Harriss, 'The struggle for Calais: an aspect of the rivalry between Lancaster and York', EHR, LXXV (1960), 30-53. A number of Somerset's followers were involved in the attempts to retain Gascony. John Bastard of Somerset was a member of the force that embarked under Viscount Lisle in March 1453, Richard Frogenhall of the prospective expedition under Lord Say in July (Marshall, thesis cit., 180-82). Others connected with Somerset found employment in the custody of Calais, most notably Osbert Mundeford and Leo Lord Welles (Harriss, loc.cit., 32, 46).

His property, goods, even his person, were singled out for attack.⁽¹⁾

In retrospect, both York's accusations and the traditional assessment of Somerset's governorship as one of incompetence and mismanagement appear unfounded. While certain features of the duke's military conduct deserve criticism (his failure to take the risk of committing a substantial army to the field in the early stages of the war, for example) the loss of Normandy stemmed ultimately from a muddled diplomatic policy and insufficient military assistance from England. Moreover the hitherto little-used records of the Norman treasury show Somerset's civil and military administration far more competent and efficient than he has perhaps been given credit for. Certainly the dramatic picture painted by critics such as York and Fastolf of an essentially corrupt government finds little support from these sources.

(1) Marshall, thesis cit., 161.

CHAPTER SIX THE BEAUFORT LANDS IN FRANCE

(i) A general survey

Once the systematic conquest of Normandy had been undertaken by Henry V, the dispersal of the newly acquired French lordships became a corner-stone of his policy of occupation. The size of the grants varied from the major estates granted to the king's brothers and principal members of the nobility to single fiefs bestowed upon the lesser nobility and captains who had played a part in the conquest. Their purpose was however the same; they were to encourage residence and specific military commitments such as the repair and defence of castles and the provision of troops in time of need.⁽¹⁾ The Treaty of Troyes, which established Henry's right to the title of king of England and France, saw the enrolment of such grants under the seal of France in the chancery at Paris.⁽²⁾ On Henry's death, at Vincennes in 1422, control of this important area of patronage was taken over by the Regent Bedford and the royal council.

Although most of the available lordships and holdings in English-occupied France had been granted to individual owners by Henry V, reversion on the death of the holder coupled with new conquests and confiscations, particularly in Maine, combined to keep the French land market an important and attractive source of reward. Occasionally the council was empowered to sell properties from the royal demesne itself but instances such as

(1) These grants were recorded on the Norman Rolls, calendared in Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records, XLI.

(2) Now to be found at the Archives Nationales, JJ 172-5. The grants are calendared in P. Le Cacheux, Actes de la chancellerie d'Henri VI concernant la Normandie sous la domination anglaise (1422-35) (Paris, 2 vols, 1907-8), though this series of extracts is not a complete record.

these were rare.⁽¹⁾ The incentive that such grants offered was not solely one of financial profit; a title and dignity were also attractive propositions, both to the substantial numbers of gentry that crossed to France as well as to younger sons of established noble families. As such the resources of patronage provided for the two younger Beaufort brothers, Thomas and Edmund, Norman titles and landed wealth that they lacked in England.

The circumstances of the first land grant to Edmund Beaufort are particularly interesting. Although a younger son, after the capture of his two older brothers John and Thomas at Baugé in 1421, he was the sole active representative of the second generation of his family. This peculiar situation gave his entry into the war effort an added significance. Edmund had been one of the captains recruited by the regent in the spring of 1427; he was to be employed at the crucial siege of Montargis in August of the same year.⁽²⁾ As a mark of favour, Bedford granted him the comté of Mortain in south-west Normandy, making the donation soon after his return to Paris on 22 April 1427.⁽³⁾ The comté had previously been held under the administration of the regent himself and its settlement on Edmund Beaufort was thus an important distribution of patronage.

The text of the grant elaborated the reasons for the gift:

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- (1) On 17 November 1431 members of the Grand Conseil were authorised to sell confiscated fiefs and lordships up to the value of 15,000 livres tournois in order to raise money for the government: C.T. Allmand, 'The Lancastrian land settlement in Normandy, 1417-50', EcHR, XXI (1968), 468.
- (2) Edmund Beaufort, with Roger Lord Camoys, and Henry Bourchier, count of Eu, was one of the captains at the siege under the command of the earl of Warwick (BN, Ms. Fr. 4484, f.69).
- (3) AN, JJ 173, f.315.

'Que pour consideracion de la proximate de ligneage en quoy nous attient notre trescher et tresame cousin Edmond de Beauford chevalier et les services que de son enfance il a fait a feu notre trescher seigneur et pere iusques a son trespas et que depuis il a fait de jour en jour et a entencion de servir et continuer en temps avenir et pour aucunes autres causes et consideracions a ce nous mouvans a icellui notre cousin par ladvis de notre trescher et tresame oncle Jehan Regent notre Royaume de France duc de Bedford a nous donne cede ottroye transporte et delaisse et par la teneur de ces presentes de grace especial plaine puissance et autorite Royale donnons cedons ottroyons transportons et delaissons le Conte de Mortaing ainsi comme Il se comprint et extent que fut et appartint a feu notre cousin Pierre de Navarre ... et du quel conte comme a nous appartenent tant a cause et par le moien de la conqueste faite de notre duchie de normandie Comme par le trespas de feu notre cousin Emond Holland Auquel ledit conte fut donne par notredit feu seigneur et pere a notredit oncle a enjoir pour aucun temps Pour enjoier par notredit cousin Emond de Beauford et ses heirs masles venans de lui en loyal marriage perpetuellement heriditablement ...' (1)

Although Edmund had crossed over to France with his brothers in November 1419 he had been too young to take part in any of the fighting.⁽²⁾ The key reasons for the grant were the closeness of his family to the 'blood royal' and the service, both present and future, that was expected from him in the war. Certainly the obligations towards military defence that accompanied such gifts of land were no empty or token gesture. At times of crisis such as in August 1429 all landholders were ordered by the English council to return post-haste to France to aid the hard pressed government there.⁽³⁾ If the owner failed to perform his duty the confiscation of his property was the ultimate penalty. The administration in Normandy was

(1) Ibid.

(2) John, Thomas and Edmund had crossed over to France with the retinue of their mother Margaret duchess of Clarence (WAM, 12163, ff.12, 12^v, 16^v).

(3) C.T. Allmand, 'The Lancastrian land settlement', 464.

vigorous in following up such cases during Bedford's regency though abuses became much more frequent thereafter. Serious complaints were brought against Edmund Beaufort himself in 1433, including non-residence in his comté of Mortain and failure to perform the tasks he was bound for there, and the action of the baillis of Caen and the Cotentin was only suspended on the despatch of letters patent from Westminster, on 31 July 1433, giving the assurance that Edmund would be crossing over to Normandy very shortly.⁽¹⁾

The wording of the grant contained the formal surrender of Bedford's own rights of possession, marking a particular degree of favour from the regent. Although from a major aristocratic family, Edmund himself was a young and relatively unknown figure in English-occupied France. Jean Le Beque, prebendary of Mortain, was travelling abroad when the grant was made. On his return he found he had lost his position to Edmund's candidate Jean François. Challenging the right of presentment in the Paris Parlement, the surprised Le Beque submitted that he had never even heard of Edmund Beaufort before.⁽²⁾

The endowment, to Edmund and his heirs male, allowed him to enjoy the revenues and rights to the comté of Mortain in the same manner as the late Pierre of Navarre. Pierre of Navarre had been granted the comté by Charles VI on 2 May 1401. A full-scale assessment of its revenues had been made in 1401-2 and had been evaluated at a yearly value of

(1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.307.

(2) AN, X^{1a} 4796, ff.196, 238^v, 243. I am grateful to Guy Thompson for pointing out these references to me.

2,085 livres tournois.⁽¹⁾ For the English landowners, in conditions of war and with commitment towards defence, such figures were purely theoretical. Mortain was on the Norman marches and suffered from periodic raids by French troops; its castle was very old and in considerable disrepair.⁽²⁾ Yet it still represented for a landless younger son both a substantial estate and an important title. The English equated the French rank of comte with that of an earl. The terms were often interchangeable and in formal arrangements such as indentures for war service, the payment of wages was made at an earl's rates (6s 8d a day).⁽³⁾ Edmund Beaufort performed his homage for the comté of Mortain to Henry VI a few days after the king had been crowned in Paris on 18 December 1431.⁽⁴⁾ He was to remain styled count of Mortain until his creation as earl of Dorset in 1438.⁽⁵⁾

The terms by which Edmund's brother Thomas received the comté of Perche unfortunately have not survived. The honour had become vacant after the death of Thomas earl of Salisbury at Orléans in November 1428. Thomas Beaufort had finally been released from captivity around April 1430 and the first record of him being styled count of Perche came on his arrival in France (August 1430) when his own active war service commenced.⁽⁶⁾ It

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- (1) H. Sauvage, 'Documents relatifs à la donation du comté-pairie de Mortain à Pierre de Navarre par Charles VI', Société de l'Histoire de Normandie, Mélanges, V (1898), 318.
- (2) The castle was briefly lost to the French in the 1430s (BL, Add. Ch. 10990). On its recovery in 1433 the decision was taken to demolish it, and a force was despatched for the task under High Spencer, bailli of the Cotentin (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.183).
- (3) Eg. PRO, E403/696 (20 February, 16 March 1431), payments to the counts of Mortain and Perche and their retinues.
- (4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 43, f.385.
- (5) Edmund Beaufort was formally created earl of Dorset on 28 August 1442 (CChR, VI, 37). His rank seems to have been orally confirmed by the king before his expedition sailed to France in May 1438, from which date he is styled earl of Dorset in government records and by contemporaries.
- (6) BL, Add. Ch. 372 (27 August 1430).

seems likely that he received his title and estate in similar circumstances to his brother, only in this instance his uncle the cardinal, a prominent member of the Grand Conseil, who had just made a further loan to the hard-pressed administration, was probably influential in obtaining the grant.⁽¹⁾ Thomas was to enjoy his new estate little more than a year. He died during the siege of Louviers in 1431 and on 11 October 1431 the comté was bestowed upon Humphrey earl of Stafford, with whom it remained until the end of the English occupation.⁽²⁾

From the wording of the grant to Stafford it is clear that the donation to Thomas Beaufort had also been made to him and his heirs male.⁽³⁾ The estate, which included the castle of Bellême, was valued in one of Stafford's accounts at a yearly worth of 800 marks.⁽⁴⁾ The comté was situated in south-eastern Normandy, a low-lying region, with both sides constantly raiding across it, and the amount of revenue that could be extracted under these conditions must have been considerably lower than this estimate.⁽⁵⁾ Nevertheless it again provided an important title and estate to Thomas, who at his death held no land in England.

Such a policy of ennoblement from Norman baronies and dignities was to have a particular impact on the indigenous system of rank and honours in England. John Lord Beaumont, who had held the title of count of Boulogne

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- (1) The cardinal's loans included contributions towards the purchase of Joan of Arc from the Burgundians, the Burgundian army at Compiègne and the new force under his nephew Thomas: BN, Ms. Fr. 20327, f.150 (30 August 1430).
- (2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 24, f.61.
- (3) Ibid.
- (4) C. Rawcliffe, The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham, 1394-1521 (Cambridge, 1973), 109. In reality it seems that certainly by the 1440s whatever clear profits were collected were being ploughed back into local defence and it may even have been necessary to subsidise the garrison of Bellême from England (ibid., 114-15).
- (5) For a description of the general conditions of this area see E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 246.

and was also granted the vicomté of Beaumont in Maine, received in January 1440 the style of viscount. This new dignity was also granted in 1446 to Henry Bouchier, who had held the comté of Eu since 1420. The creation of this new title reflected the contemporary awareness of the frequent disparity between estates and honours held in France and England.⁽¹⁾ There is every indication that Norman titles remained prestigious even at the end of the English occupation. Sir Richard Woodville, created as baron in May 1448, chose as his title Lord Rivers, from the barony of Reviers which he held in the Norman Cotentin.⁽²⁾

The marks of favour thus shown to the younger members of the Beaufort family were significant but fully commensurate both with their closeness to the 'blood royal' and participation in the war effort. They did not disturb the general balance of the land settlement in Normandy or antagonise other members of the nobility. However the death of the Regent Bedford in September 1435 and the growing influence of the young king in the affairs of the realm created a different political climate. The winter of 1435 saw a major new initiative in the war. Bedford's death had created a power vacuum in France that was to be filled by three new commands. Humphrey duke of Gloucester was appointed captain of Calais, Richard duke of York as king's lieutenant of France and Normandy, to be assisted by the earls of Suffolk and Salisbury, and Edmund Beaufort was to lead a new expedition into Maine and Anjou. These plans involved a large financial outlay and loans from the Beaufort family provided an important

(1) J. Enoch Powell and K. Wallis, The House of Lords in the Middle Ages (1968), 467-9.

(2) Ibid., 485.

contribution towards the expenses.⁽¹⁾ In the event it was the Beauforts who benefited from an important dispersal of royal patronage when Edmund was granted the wealthy comté of Harcourt in eastern Normandy which had lain vacant since the death of Bedford.

Under letters patent issued at Westminster on 23 December 1435, Edmund Beaufort was granted the comté to him and his heirs male:

'... en consideracion des grans bons loyaulte et notables services que son tres cher et tres ame cousin Emond de Beauford conte de Mortaing lui a fait tant au fait de ses guerres de France comme autrement a icelui son cousin donne cede transporte et delaisse le conte de Harecourt et autres terres et possessions et revenus advenus au feu roy son pere par la rebellion et ~~desobeissance~~ du conte de Harcourt et dont ont joui par aucun temps l'un apres l'autre ses treschers et tresames oncles les Ducs d'Excestre et de Bedford et depuis sont revenus en sa main par le trespas de sondit oncle le Duc de Bedford decede sans avoir laisse aucuns heirs masles de lui en directe ligne, ensemble les fiefs et autres fiefs tenus et mouvant dudit conte eschans audit signeur Roy...'. (2)

Although the terms of the grant made it clear that Edmund was to enjoy rights and revenues to the same extent as the previous owner, the duke of Bedford, there was in fact considerable confusion over the inclusion of properties annexed to the comté of Harcourt. A new donation, made in a full council meeting at Westminster on 19 March 1437, confirmed Beaufort's rights to a number of attendant fiefs held by the original French owner Jean d'Harcourt and his wife Marie d'Alençon.⁽³⁾ This substantial parcel of lands included the lordships of Quatremare, Routot,

(1) A. Steel, The Receipt of the Exchequer, 207-9.

(2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 75, f.5.

(3) BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre)/19.

Auvers as well as a number of smaller fiefs. Having secured these properties, Edmund Beaufort performed homage for the comté of Harcourt to the king at Kennington on 5 July 1437.⁽¹⁾

These Harcourt lands were a valuable prize and according to the estimate of Bedford's receiver were of a value of no less than 7,153 livres tournois.⁽²⁾ This figure must be treated with caution but it gives an indication of the importance of the grant. For Edmund Beaufort the gift made him one of the major landowners in Normandy. Other parts of Bedford's Norman estate reverted to his brother Humphrey duke of Gloucester but significantly Richard duke of York, the new lieutenant-general in France, received no benefits from this dispersal of the regent's landed possessions.

In the summer of 1438 Edmund's older brother John Beaufort, earl of Somerset, was at last released after seventeen years of captivity. His ransom and the expenses of his long period of captivity amounted by the earl's own reckoning to no less than £24,000.⁽³⁾ Despite these circumstances it was significant that Somerset was prepared to re-enter the war effort almost immediately. He served briefly in France in the summer of 1439 and returned to Normandy in January 1440 with a new army and a commission as acting lieutenant-general 'sur le fait de la guerre', an appointment to stand while a more permanent successor was decided on. As a mark of gratitude for his services and as some sort of recompense

(1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 42, f.213.

(2) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 554.

(3) CPR, 1436-41, 515.

for his long captivity Henry granted Somerset, on 7 May 1440, the appanage of St-Sauveur-Lendelin in the Norman Cotentin:

'... pour consideracion des services que nous a fais les temps passes soit a present chacun jour et esperons que plus ferra le temps advenir au fait de nos guerres de france et autrement en diverses manieres Notre trescher et tresame cousin Jehan de Beauford conte de Somerset a present notre Lieutenant General et gouverneur depar nous sur le fait de la guerre en nos Roialme de France et duchie de normendie et mesment pour consideracion des pertes inconveniens et dommages quil a eus a cause de notredit service par longue detention de prison es mains de nos adversaires et autrement Et affin que lui qui nous est sy prouchain de lignage ayt meulx de quoy maintenir son estat en notredit service honourablement...'. (1)

The grant, of an annual value of 3,000 salus d'or, was made to John and his heirs male with the small reservation that a tenth of the first year's revenue should contribute towards the costs of the fortification of the palace at Rouen. The settlement upon Somerset of lands held as a royal appanage was a significant mark of patronage. The donation was to serve as surety for a more substantial landed estate and was to remain in force until lands of a similar value were granted to the earl from other parts of Normandy. It was made by Henry in his palace of Westminster with Suffolk the only member of council present. Such circumstances reflected the growing influence of William de la Pole as the king's chief minister. The decision over the grant had however probably been made around the time of Somerset's indenture for his new army in December 1439, as is indicated by a letter of the earl himself to the Norman Chambre des Comptes. (2)

(1) AN, P 1934⁴, ff.1-2. The valuation of the lands at 3,000 salus a year was derived from the last assessment of the property, made in 1410. Another vidimus of this grant survives in PRO, E30/1640.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 2714 (Somerset)/4.

The appanage of St - Sauveur-Lendelin had been held by the duke of Orléans before its confiscation by the English crown. The estate formed two halves, the upper around St - Sauveur-Lendelin, to the north of Coutances, the lower in the region of Cérences to the south. There was no caput or seat for this property; the castle at St - Sauveur-Lendelin had long been in ruins and Somerset's officials seem to have made use of the nearby castle of Hambye.⁽¹⁾ Despite the careful wording of the grant, for the Norman treasury to instruct the local baillis and vicomtes to allow entrance to Somerset's own agents, royal officials proceeded with extreme caution. Since the estate was of the royal demesne, the Norman chancery delayed sealing the letters authorising the grant and on 29 May 1440 Somerset wrote complaining that his own officers were still being refused admittance.⁽²⁾ In fact it was to require further royal letters confirming the gift, issued at Kennington on 20 June 1440, before John was at last able to take possession.⁽³⁾

The region around Coutances where these estates lay was far less vulnerable to the ravages of war than many properties in eastern Normandy. Even so, in a petition to the king and council in 1443 Somerset claimed that the lands were unable to yield their full value and secured the right of title in the same manner that the duke of Orléans had held.⁽⁴⁾ The estate was a valuable prize, and a few days after Somerset's death

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- (1) Documents concerning the trial of Guillaume d'Auberive in August 1440 refer to the castle of Hambye being held by the earl of Somerset. His receiver there was Jean Perriot, cure of St - Aubin-des-Bois (ADSM, G 1164).
- (2) BN, Pièces Originales 2714 (Somerset)/4.
- (3) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.273.
- (4) PRO, E28/73. Although this grant is undated frequent erasures of 'earl' substituted by 'duke' suggest a date circa 30 March 1443, when Somerset's new rank was confirmed by the king.

without male issue was secured by Richard duke of York for his second (surviving) son, Edmund.⁽¹⁾

A major new donation to the Beaufort family took place on 19 July 1442 when the king, at Windsor, granted the comté of Maine to Edmund Beaufort.⁽²⁾ This royal appanage had been enjoyed by the Regent Bedford before passing back into the royal demesne at his death. The grant recognised that Edmund had already been serving as the king's captain-general and governor in Anjou and Maine for a number of years as well as performing good service in the wars in France generally. He was to have possession of the comté of Maine for a term of life only, after which it would revert to the crown. As in the previous grant, a fraction of the first year's revenue, in this case a twentieth, was to be contributed to the fortification of the palace at Rouen. However the grant also included the important reservation that if the king, wishing to treat with the French, felt it necessary to surrender Maine, Edmund would be bound to relinquish his own rights to the property.

This new mark of patronage, which again took place with Suffolk the only member of the king's council present, indicates clearly that the idea of delivering Maine to the French in return for a treaty of peace was already being seriously considered by Henry and his chief minister. Despite these circumstances, the comté of Maine was a prestigious grant, indeed it would normally only be held by the king's heir or an immediate

(1) AN, P1934⁴, ff.2-3; Collection Dom Lenoir, 10, f.17 (31 May 1444). A wealth of detail on this appanage is provided in the information carried out for Richard duke of York for his son Edmund. It was completed on 20 June 1449, by royal officers headed by Thomas Hardy, the lieutenant of Bertrand Entwhistle, bailli of the Cotentin (AN, P1934⁴, f.1).

(2) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 3642 (Collection Bastard d'Estaing)/804.

member of his family. Its real value in financial terms was problematical. The area was already heavily committed in private property rights. A valor of the revenues from the comté under Bedford for the year 1433-4 assessed the income from the demesne at 1,200 livres tournois.⁽¹⁾ By 1442 this figure would have been much less as growing war damage and further losses to the French, including Ste.-Suzanne and Beaumont-sur-Sarthe, took their toll.

The new alienation from the royal demesne was again treated cautiously by the Norman administration, who refused to seal the letters authorising the grant. However with Edmund's brother preparing to lead an important expedition to France a new arrangement was decided on. In one of his articles of service John referred to the fact that his brother's grant had not been enrolled by the French chancery, requesting that if the gift was made again, to his brother or anyone else, he himself would have the reservation to the rights and title of the comté for a period of seven years.⁽²⁾ This condition was granted by the king and approved in the council meeting of 30 March 1443; Garter^{King}-at-Arms was despatched to notify York and the Norman administration of the new arrangements.⁽³⁾ It had already been decided to appoint Somerset to the post of captain-general and governor of Anjou and Maine for a seven-year term when his brother's own commission expired; the gift of the comté of Maine for an equal length of time was seen as commensurate with the new area of authority. This alteration of the original grant to Edmund may have alienated him from his brother. However John's death little over a year later prevented the stipulation coming into effect.

(1) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 549.

(2) PRO, C47/26/28, article 22. The full text is given in Appendix 2.

(3) PPC, V, 259-63.

The course of the negotiations over the expedition of 1443 revealed the importance John attached to establishing a major patrimony in France. Especially significant was a request for an endowment of the confiscated lands of the duke of Alençon, the last major estate held in the royal demesne.⁽¹⁾ These estates were mostly situated in the bailliage of Alençon, stretching from Verneuil in the east to Domfront in the west. John's article did however contain reference to the possibility that Henry might wish to return the confiscated lands to the duke of Alençon in the interests of a lasting peace, in which case the king was 'to do therewith as shall please him best'. Allowance for a restitution of the lands of the duke of Alençon was a clear indication of the king's own interest in achieving a long-lasting peace agreement. If Henry was willing to surrender his claim to the title of king of England and France in return for the right to hold the duchy of Normandy as a fief from the French king, the consequence would be a restoration of lands of the exiled native nobility. During these deliberations between Somerset and Henry this was already a real possibility. Such an eventuality had already been considered in the peace negotiations of 1439, and would have included returning the lands of the duke of Alençon, the counts of Mortain, Harcourt, Tancarville, Eu, Aumale, as well as many smaller lordships. If peace was concluded on these terms the interests of both Beauforts would be vitally affected, as well as many other members of the English nobility - a factor that contributed a very real element of insecurity for those participating in the war effort.⁽²⁾

(1) PRO, C47/26/28, article 15: see Appendix 2.

(2) PPC, V, 393-4; Allmand, 'Anglo-French negotiations of 1439', Camden Miscellany, XXIV (1972), 130-3.

Alençon's estates in southern Normandy and the vicomté of Beaumont in Maine represented a major landed endowment. However on this occasion Henry chose to retain them in the royal demesne for his own purposes and Somerset remained disappointed.⁽¹⁾ John did however secure the king's customary right concerning the disposal of conquered territory during the course of his expedition.⁽²⁾ The access both the Beaufort brothers had to the king over the distribution of the major French estates remaining in the crown's possession was remarkable and certainly without parallel among the higher nobility.⁽³⁾

The death of John Beaufort in 1444 left his brother Edmund with the sole right to the comté of Maine. It was an honour that he valued highly and when the arrangement to surrender it to the French was finally announced in the council on 27 July 1447 it brought him into conflict with the king himself. Some months of confusion followed with Edmund's captains in Maine refusing to allow the royal officers to take possession and the king and council responding with a strongly worded letter warning him of the consequences of further disobedience by his agents. The crisis passed only when generous terms of compensation were agreed upon. In a full meeting of the council on 13 November 1447 (York, Buckingham, Suffolk, Cromwell, Scrope and Cardinal Kemp were present along with the treasurer, Adam Moleyns and the chancellor Stafford) Edmund Beaufort was

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- (1) The marginal note to the article contains the rather ambiguous comment 'My saide lorde knoweth hereinne the kynges answer'. Since there is no record of any such grant it is almost certain that the king retained the lands.
- (2) M. Jones, 'John Beaufort, and the French expedition of 1443', 91.
- (3) The duchy of Alençon and the comté of Maine and duchy of Anjou had been held by the Regent Bedford before reverting to the royal demesne on his death in 1435 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 2, f.185; AN, K168, no.94).

awarded an annual pension of 10,000 livres tournois to be drawn from the quatrième, the tax on beer, cider and other beverages, in the bailliages of Caen and the Cotentin.⁽¹⁾ The grant reviewed the offices of captain-general and count of Maine that had been held by Edmund and the decision to effect a surrender to the French. The arrangements for compensation were then announced:

'... Savoir faisons que nous considerans et cognoissans par experience de fait les grans et notables et agreables services que nous a fais les temps passe notredit cousin de dorset en la conduite de nos guerres de france Esquelles bien souvant comme loyal vassal prouchain de notre sang et lineage il a emploie sa chevaunce liberalement et de bon vouloir a l'onneur de nous et au bien et conservacion de notredit seigneurie desirans et voulans le Recompenser deuement pour les choses dessusdites Comme raison est promis a lui avons...'

The details of the collection of this large pension were then carefully elucidated, along with additional safeguards if the sum fell short. The resulting terms represented something of a fait accompli, following Edmund's own petition to raise the sum from an assiette (ie. an assignment from a regular tax) as a surer guarantee of full and regular payment. The grant, which was for a term of life, was worth far more than the revenue from Maine could ever be expected to produce, a fact which Richard duke of York was angrily to draw attention to some years later.⁽²⁾

The outcome of this particular piece of negotiation was another clear indication both of the importance of Maine to Edmund Beaufort and the favour shown to him by the king; this despite his own defiance of royal orders. Edmund's own star was in the ascendant; he was soon to cross over

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5834.

(2) The Paston Letters, I, 108.

to France as the new lieutenant-general, while York was forced to accept a post of virtual exile in Ireland.

Along with these particular grants of French estates the king had recourse to a more indirect form of patronage. Since Henry VI was never to cross over to France to take up government personally, he was prepared to delegate certain limited powers concerning the disposal of lands held in the royal demesne. Both York and Warwick, successive lieutenants-general from 1436-39, were authorised by their commissions of service to make grants of crown lands in France up to a maximum value of 3,000 salus d'or for each donation.⁽¹⁾ Such grants were used to reward Frenchmen remaining loyal to the English administration, English captains, settlers and members of the government for good service, as well as providing a legitimate way to reward the governor's own household and members of his immediate circle. These opportunities were enjoyed by Edmund Beaufort in his post of captain-general and governor of Anjou and Maine, which he held from 1438. Servants and members of his estate administration benefited from grants of lands which had reverted to the royal demesne in Maine, as well as associates of his brother.⁽²⁾ John Beaufort was to make use of similar powers in Normandy as acting 'lieutenant-general sur le fait de la guerre' in 1440, though the scope of his grants was limited to lands of a yearly value of under 500 livres tournois.⁽³⁾ He was making such donations regularly from his return

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 5330, ff.137, 137^v (copies of the governing commissions of York and Warwick as lieutenants-general 1436, 1437).

(2) See above, 126, n.1.

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, f.81.

to Normandy in January 1440; the grants were being enrolled in the Norman chancery from February.⁽¹⁾ Along with members of the Norman administration, such as Thomas Hoo, and native Frenchmen, those to benefit from such gifts included members of the earl's household as well as his brother Edmund and his servants.⁽²⁾ It is likely that Edmund Beaufort held similar powers himself as lieutenant-general of France and Normandy from 1448-50 but little trace of his grants survive.⁽³⁾ Under such circumstances it was not surprising that many members of the Beaufort affinity became small landowners in France in their own right.⁽⁴⁾ However while such opportunities to exercise their own patronage must have been valued highly by the Beauforts they never developed them to the degree shown by Richard duke of York, who in his two terms as lieutenant-general made a conscious effort to introduce his own men into Norman government and reward them accordingly.⁽⁵⁾

From a consideration of all these grants made to the Beaufort family, several factors emerge. The first was a recognition of their

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- (1) In the accounts of Louis de Banent, 'libraire et parcheminier' in the Norman Chambre des Comptes, an entry under 9 March 1440 reads: 'Recue ung caier du Registre des dons fais par monsieur de Somerset'. (BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3973).
- (2) A grant of lands worth 80 livres tournois a year was made by Somerset at Rouen (11 August 1440) to Thomas Hoo, lands worth 35 livres tournois to Jean de Lisle, 'bourgeois de Rouen' on 16 September (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 27, ff.7, 21). On 1 February 1440 at Rouen Somerset rewarded a secretary in his service, Laurent Calot, with a similar grant (ibid., 26, f.447). Sometimes specific pieces of property were given as when Somerset, at Honfleur on 14 June, granted Henry Spicier a house in the town (ibid., 26, f.463). For other grants, to members of Somerset's household and to his brothers', see above, 126, n.1.
- (3) Evidence of land grants by this period is virtually non-existent.
- (4) Richard Okam, 'Corfe' pursuivant, who served under John and Edmund Beaufort, had lands in the bailliages of Caen and Cotentin (BL, Add. Ch. 14397). John Stanley, a member of Edmund Beaufort's household held lands in the bailliage of Gisors (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.303).
- (5) A. Curry, 'Military organisation in Lancastrian Normandy', 206-7.

closeness to the 'blood royal'. This was common to donations made during the minority and by Henry VI himself; the Beauforts' proximity to the royal line made it proper that special provision should be made for them, especially in the case of the two younger sons, Thomas and Edmund. While this in itself was no more than a normal feature of royal patronage, it acquired particular significance during the 1440s with the growing dynastic insecurity of the king's own position. After Humphrey duke of Gloucester, who had no heirs, it was not clear where the succession would lie and the king's special provision of the comté of Maine in favour of the Beauforts, a royal appanage which would normally be held by an heir presumptive, must have given Richard duke of York considerable cause for concern. Indeed it is possible that in Edmund Beaufort's position as count of Maine lay the origins of the quarrel between the two men.⁽¹⁾

The second factor was the considerable war service the family had been prepared to undertake. Edmund had campaigned actively as the king's constable in 1429-30 and in 1431. His valiant efforts in the relief of Calais in 1436 earned the young king's special gratitude; he and Talbot had gained further success through the relief of Avranches and the recapture of Harfleur. Thomas Beaufort was prepared to return to France in August 1430 only months after ending a nine-year period of captivity. Similarly his older brother John was prepared to take up a command in France less than a year after finally ending a seventeen-year period of captivity in 1438. It was with this record in mind that the king, contacting John Beaufort with regard to a new expedition in February 1443, reminded him of his good service, 'the which he hath alle tymes redyed hymself to'.⁽²⁾

(1) See above, 198-9.

(2) PPC, V, 226.

At a time when the tide of war was running against the English, the consistent record of service from the entire Beaufort family was exceptional. The regular references to good performance in the war in the letters patent authorising land grants were thus no empty formula. Up to the end of 1440, the record of the family had been consistently good and the king was grateful to them. Such a consideration may help to explain the exclusion of the heir to the throne, Humphrey duke of Gloucester, from the major grants of French lands during the 1440s. After his one month expedition to relieve Calais in 1436 Gloucester was in fact never to cross to France again, although he was originally offered the post of king's lieutenant-general in 1440.

However even when these two factors have been taken into account, the record of major grants to the Beauforts after the young king had himself entered into the affairs of government represented a virtual monopoly of patronage. Certainly the important dimension of the dispersal of the crown's French estates belies the comment of B.P. Wolffe that Henry's patronage was aimless and not directed towards any particular noble family.⁽¹⁾ What is most remarkable is the access the Beauforts had to the major estates held in the royal demesne, in contrast to the other members of the nobility serving in France. Richard duke of York held no French titles at all until the end of his term of governorship in 1445 when a new appanage was created for him from the comtés of Evreux and Beaumont-le-Roger and the vicomtés of Orbec and Breteuil.⁽²⁾ This was

(1) B.P. Wolffe, 'The personal rule of Henry VI', in Fifteenth-century England, 1399-1509, ed. S.B. Chrimes, C.D. Ross and R.A. Griffiths (Manchester, 1972), 37.

(2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.207.

a large holding though much of it was overrun by the enemy. Talbot gained little profit despite his long record of service, his only major grant, the comté of Clermont-en-Beauvaisis, was in French hands by the 1430s.⁽¹⁾

The Beauforts clearly enjoyed a special relationship with the king. In part this was a reflection of the considerable influence of the cardinal in the realm of foreign affairs, both through his large loans and his diplomatic skill. Yet it was also an indication of Henry's own personal preference. It is dangerous to go to the extreme portrayed by K.B. McFarlane of the king as a virtual cipher and a court faction headed by Suffolk channelling royal patronage in the direction of the Beauforts.⁽²⁾ The grants reflected Henry's own particular interest in the possibility of a peace settlement with the French as well as a partiality towards the Beaufort family, but it was clear that in the king's eyes the prospects of a negotiated peace took priority. In the resultant uncertainty both Suffolk and Edmund Beaufort were to suffer rather than to benefit.

It is necessary to see this consistent policy of patronage within this wider context. However, without doubt, Henry VI was prepared to allow a unique concentration of the principal estates available in the royal gift in the hands of one noble family. As such it could not fail to antagonise men such as Richard duke of York and served to focus resentment against the Beauforts.

(1) E.M. Burney, thesis cit., 248.

(2) K.B. McFarlane, 'The Lancastrian kings, 1399-1461', in The Cambridge Medieval History, VIII, The close of the middle ages, ed. W. Previt -Orton and Z.N. Brooke (Cambridge, 1936), 399.

(ii) Edmund Beaufort - the accumulation of a landed estate in France,
1427-50

Lands in France could be acquired in a variety of ways: royal grant, purchase, inheritance, legal action or donation. If the landlord was an active and influential figure property could well be built up through all these different means. By far the most important was the patronage exercised by the crown. Landed settlement was an integral part both of the defence of the conquests made by Henry V and further military expansion; those involved in the war effort could look forward to the reward of a portion of the confiscated French estates.⁽¹⁾ Since all such grants were officially enrolled, first under the English chancery, then after the Treaty of Troyes at the Chambre des Comptes at Paris (and after the city's fall in 1436 at Rouen) their chances of survival were greater.⁽²⁾ Such gifts varied from a major donation from the royal demesne, a comté, appanage or rich lordship to small grants such as the ownership of a house. Purchase was another important method for enlarging an estate, though the records of this are more fragmentary. Apart from the rare instances where English material sheds light on these transactions the major source is provided by the records of the French tabellionnages, where such arrangements were usually registered.⁽³⁾ The survival of most of these registers during the period of English occupation at Caen and Rouen gives a partial picture of such activity, but sadly they do not exist for any of the other major towns.

(1) C.T. Allmand, 'The Lancastrian land settlement', 462-5,

(2) Many were destroyed in the fire in the Louvre in 1737. However the collection of transcripts made by the French Maurist Dom Lenoir affords a valuable and detailed source of information taken from these records (C.T. Allmand, 'The Collection of Dom Lenoir', 202-4).

(3) The relevance of these records at Rouen is indicated in A. Dubuc, 'Le tabellionage rouennais durant l'occupation anglaise, (1418-45)', Bulletin philologique et historique du Comité des Travaux historiques et scientifiques, 1967, (Paris, 1968), 797-808.

From the evidence that does survive, it appears that such transactions were usually small, houses, plots of land and small estates, although there were one or two notable exceptions.⁽¹⁾

The contentious area of legal dispute was another important means of both acquiring and safeguarding property. There are many instances of cases involving Englishmen appearing before the Paris Parlement up to the fall of the city in 1436 and such records show the value attached to lands in France.⁽²⁾ Beyond the registers of the Parlement, documentary evidence is far more scanty. Before most cases could proceed to a major court they would be heard at local level before the assises of the baillis, and little survives concerning these proceedings. The majority of Norman land cases were dealt with by the court of law of the Norman council; again no record of its deliberations or judgments exists. Such disputes that were brought before the Norman Échiquier, on the rare occasions that it met, are for the most part only recorded by an entry of the names of the parties concerned in the action.⁽³⁾ Chance references to cases in progress do survive, sometimes in the receipts of payment to those performing some service to the court, but the picture that can be built up is only fragmentary rather than comprehensive.

Finally, lands could be transferred by form of bequest or donation, usually if the recipient was a person of some influence.⁽⁴⁾ Considering

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- (1) The most notable being the purchase by Bertrand Entwhistle of Suffolk's barony of Bricquebec in the Cotentin in 1429 (C.T. Allmand, 'The Lancastrian land settlement', 467).
- (2) Ibid., 468-70.
- (3) I am grateful to M. Le Pesant at the Archives Nationales for discussing these points with me.
- (4) For example, the transfer of the donation of the seigneurie of Rosel (north-west of Caen) from the duke of Somerset to Richard Harrington, bailli of Caen, with Somerset's permission in view of the good services performed by Harrington to the donor (24 March 1450): ADC, Tabellionage de Caen, 7E 91 (1447-51).

the variety and dispersal of all these different forms of evidence, it is for the most part impossible to build up a complete list of French properties owned by any particular Englishman. However the convergence of material, particularly in relation to the remnants of the Chambre des Comptes, can give an indication of the more important lands held by an individual.

While information on the acquisition of lands in France is in a number of respects limited, the actual detail of the management of these estates is far more scarce. Estate accounts themselves rarely survive.⁽¹⁾ For the most part evidence is dependent on those records kept or enrolled by the French treasury. The most detailed were the informations, the full survey of the value of an estate usually made on the death of the owner. Brief reference to the ownership of lands is also found in the aveux de dénombrement, the acts of homage made to the crown by landowners when they took possession of their estates, also the delays granted to particular owners to allow them the time to make the necessary aveux.⁽²⁾ An additional source is provided by the Chambre des Comptes in its capacity of administrative supervision, overseeing the accounts of local officials. When individual comtés were granted to an Englishman the vicomtes performed a double function, as officers of the crown and also as agents of the particular owner. Their accounts, which were returned to the Chambre des Comptes each year, reveal many payments or expenses

(1) Two important exceptions in eastern Normandy are the estate records of the lordship of Neubourg, drawn on in A. Plaisse, La Baronnie du Neubourg. Essai d'histoire agraire, économique et sociale (Paris, 1961), 309, 334, and the accounts of the lordship of Tancarville, made use of in G. Bois, Crise du Féodalisme (Paris, 1976), 284-308.

(2) C.T. Allmand, 'The Collection of Dom Lenoir', 205.

charged on their receipt by the holder of the comté.⁽¹⁾ Beyond the corpus of material retained by the treasury itself, there survive further scattered references, usually in the form of quittances, notes of discharge for service or payment. The overall picture is inevitably an incomplete one, though in the case of major landowners holding property in France over a long period of time, some pattern does emerge.

In the second generation of the Beaufort family, the only material of any substance concerns the long career in France of the youngest son Edmund Beaufort.⁽²⁾ Edmund was accumulating and administering lands abroad over a period of twenty-three years (1427-50); significantly he held little of any worth in England itself before 1444. The most important single grant received by him, the comté of Harcourt in eastern Normandy, has a particularly large amount of surviving material relating to the management of the estate and forms the central piece of this study.

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- (1) Sometimes wholesale extracts from what must have been the vicomte's accounts have been preserved in Chambre des Comptes material through the transcripts of Dom Lenoir, on other occasions records survive through sporadic quittances, receipts of payment by the officials. There is a particularly good series of material on Edmund Beaufort's comté of Harcourt in AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 13, 14, 15, 29.
- (2) Nothing survives concerning the administration of the comté of Perche during Thomas Beaufort's brief period of ownership from 1430-1. A few fragments concern the management of John Beaufort's lordship of St-Sauveur-Lendelin (held 1440-4): they are referred to in inventories of the Archives Départementales de la Manche, the documents themselves having been destroyed in the second world war. One such example is an agreement between the earl of Somerset and Jacques Paynel concerning a rent of 90 livres tournois a year for mills near Cérences: Inventaire de la Manche, II, 114, from the original in ADM, A 4021 (Domaine de St-Sauveur-Lendelin)/2. This arrangement may have been the cause of contention in a case involving Margaret duchess of Somerset and Jacques Paynel in the Échiquier of 1448 (ADSM, Échiquier, 1448, Registre Manuel, f.322^V).

Edmund Beaufort's first landed acquisition was the comté of Mortain in south-western Normandy. The comté was centred around the sergenteries of Mortain itself and Tinchebray to the north-east. The further sergenteries of Doessey, to the south, Corbelin to the east, and Roussel to the north-east, completed the comté. Although this comprised a reasonably self-contained administrative unit, the extent of the territory to be enjoyed by Edmund was not completely clear. The terms of the grant of 22 April 1427 merely indicated that it was to be held to the same extent as a previous owner, the late Pierre of Navarre.⁽¹⁾ Mortain had been granted to Pierre of Navarre by Charles VI, on 2 May 1401, by way of a provision of an income of 3,000 livres tournois a year. When however a survey, conducted during 1401-2, revealed that the comté itself could yield only 2,085 l. 6s. 4d tournois an additional donation was made of the nearby forest of Lande-Pourrie, to the east of Mortain, to bring the value of the grant up to the 3,000 livres tournois.⁽²⁾ It seems that the grant made to Edmund did include this later donation, for a document concerning his master of forests refers to a sale of woods made in Lande-Pourrie.⁽³⁾ But further additions made by way of reward to Pierre of Navarre's comté of Mortain, including the lordship of Condé-sur-Noireau, were not incorporated in the later grant. In Henry V's original

(1) AN, JJ 173, f.315. After the death of Pierre of Navarre in 1412, the comté was reincorporated into the royal demesne: H. Sauvage, 'Documents relatifs à la donation du Comté-Pairie de Mortain' 329-30 (29 July 1412).

(2) H. Sauvage, loc. cit., 250-325.

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26065/3638 (30 November 1438).

settlement of lands, Condé-sur-Noireau was separated from the comté, and although Edmund later attempted to secure its return he was unsuccessful.⁽¹⁾

Edmund Beaufort had received an estate with a tradition of cattle-rearing and a number of remunerative forests. During the siege of Harfleur in 1440 it was to his vicomte at Mortain that he sent an urgent despatch for twenty oxen.⁽²⁾ References to the sale of woods and general forest administration occur periodically. In addition to the large forest of Lande-Pourrie there were smaller forests of Mortain, to the east of the town, and Maisoncelles, south of Vire. Sale of woods, made on the offer of the interested party, was conducted by the maître des eaux et forêts, in consultation with the vicomte.⁽³⁾ The accounts of each individual keeper of woods were submitted to the vicomte five weeks before each term of Easter and Michaelmas, when they were then incorporated into the vicomte's own account.⁽⁴⁾ The master of woods was thus an important

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- (1) The castle and lordship of Condé-sur-Noireau had been detached from the comté of Mortain and granted to Henry Noon by Henry V (Calendar of Norman Rolls, 792). Edmund's lawyer was carrying out an inquisition at Condé-sur-Noireau in February 1440 concerning a case to go before the court of law of the Norman council over his claim to ownership. The case between Beaufort and John Fastolf, was being heard by the court in April 1440, when an adjournment was requested on Fastolf's behalf. No record of the verdict survives but subsequent references confirm that Fastolf remained in possession of the lordship: BN, Pièces Originales 1496 (Haye)/44, 45; Pièces Originales 572 (de Kalais)/11 (8 April 1440).
- (2) A letter to the vicomte and stewards at Mortain ordered them to assemble and bring to him at Harfleur with all possible haste twenty oxen (24 September 1440). Richard Beaumont, the vicomte, later received a discharge from his account for the oxen (29 October 1440): BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4120, 4154.
- (3) H.^{de} Frondeville, La vicomté d'Orbec, 214. An example of procedure is found in BL, Add. Ch. 11006, letters of Thomas Clingham, bailli of Mortain, concerning a decree of a sale of woods at Favallon received from the treasurer of the count of Mortain (12 December 1435).
- (4) Frondeville, La vicomté d'Orbec, 217.

official; in 1438 Andrew Ogard was serving in this capacity for the count.⁽¹⁾ Keepers would be appointed for individual forests, as in 1436, when on the advice of Edmund's council, Jean Chastel was given the keeping of the woods in Maisoncelles.⁽²⁾

The general administration of the comté followed conventional lines. Edmund Beaufort held Mortain direct from the king and had done personal homage to Henry VI at Paris on 18 December 1431, for the comté, 'tenu dudit seigneur Roi a cause de son Duchie de Normandie'.⁽³⁾ As the king's representative, Edmund or his council received acts of homage from those inheriting or who had been granted lands in the comté.⁽⁴⁾ It was his council at Mortain which would administer his affairs in his absence and consult with him on matters of importance. The lands of minors in the comté would similarly be held under the lord's administration until they came of age.⁽⁵⁾ Lordships where the owner had died without heirs were also reincorporated into the demesne, unless they were regranted or sold to others.⁽⁶⁾ Sadly no figures survive on the income obtained from the comté during Edmund's ownership.

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26065/3638.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26061/2971 (26 October 1436).

(3) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 43, f.385.

(4) On 17 December 1437 a délai was granted by Edmund's council to Robert du Buart concerning his homage for the fiefs of Le Bailleul and Saint Cyr du Bailleul (ibid., 42, f.213). On 3 June 1438 Edmund himself received the homage of William Nessefield for the lordship of La Pentils in the comté of Mortain (ibid., 42, f.209).

(5) For example after an information on the age of Jean de Juvigny, he was put 'hors de la garde par le Marquis de Dorset, comte de Mortain' for his lordships held of the comté: ibid., 9. f.300 (23 June 1447).

(6) BN, Ms. Fr. 26063/3224, 3225, relating to lands worth 40 livres tournois a year to be held by Edmund for a year before being sold to others (12 October 1436). Lands were often farmed out, eg. grants of property seised in the parish of Saint-Planchers (July 1442), Marilly (January 1447): G. Demay, Inventaire des Sceaux de la Normandie (Paris, 1881), 199, 203. Sadly the originals, at St-Lô, no longer survive.

The most important local official was the bailli. He held both civil and military responsibilities and for this reason was usually an Englishman. Edmund, who maintained a close contact with this official, made regular appointments of his own men. On 3 October 1438 the Lancashire professional soldier Elias of Longworth was introduced to the post by letters patent of the earl given at Rouen.⁽¹⁾ Nearly two years later on 8 June 1440, Longworth was discharged and a servant and member of his household, Jean Baieux, was nominated.⁽²⁾ John Court, who had taken the office of bailli by June 1448, also held the captaincy of the partially constructed castle being newly built at Mortain.⁽³⁾ The other major local figure was the vicomte, whose duties were both judicial and financial, including the supervision and accounting of the revenues of the comté. Charges were often made on this account by Edmund, for the wages of his officers, as well as provisions or other exceptional expenses. Among the routine judicial duties undertaken by the vicomte were making payments for the capture and delivery of brigands.⁽⁴⁾

These two officials were both members of the general council which attended to much of the routine administration of the comté. A meeting

(1) BL, Add. Ch. 441.

(2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 1, f.328, 74, f.403.

(3) The muster of the garrison of Caen, taken before John Court on 22 June 1448, mentions he is bailli of Mortain (BN, Ms. Fr. 25778/1812).

(4) Henry Barton, bailli of Mortain, received 25 livres tournois as wages for the Michaelmas term from Guillaume le Presnost, vicomte, on 26 February 1432: BN, Pièces Originales, 315 (Bertin)/3. Among references to payments by the vicomte for the capture of brigands are Bodleian, Foreign Ch. 281 (1 September 1430), the vicomte Pierre Bruart; BN, Ms. Fr. 26060/2740 (23 January 1436), the vicomte Richard Beaumont, who held the post for the remaining period of the English occupation (see also Dupont-Ferrier, Gallia Regia, II, 244). The latter quittance was at a time of considerable local unrest in the region of Mortain and Vire (R. Jouet, La résistance à l'occupation anglaise, 138-9).

of 12 October 1436 consisted of the vicomte (Richard Beaumont), the steward (Jean Chastel) and a lawyer (Bertrand le Cordier).⁽¹⁾ Minor matters of estate administration could be carried out without the need to consult the owner, such as small repairs to the estate.⁽²⁾ The wages of these officials were all charged on the receipt of the vicomte, as was regular practice and it was he who was responsible for ensuring regular payment. Any problems in this respect resulted in the swift intervention of Edmund himself, as in July 1431, when one of his councillors and auditors, Guillaume Gombault, arrived during the siege of Louviers to complain that his first year's wages had not been met. A rapid response from the count ordered the vicomte of Mortain to make good the sum without further delay.⁽³⁾ This post of auditor of the accounts was an important one. On 15 May 1433 Edmund appointed Raoul Auguy as councillor and auditor of the accounts of Mortain and his other receivers.⁽⁴⁾ Auguy was later elevated to Edmund's treasurer and receiver-general in Normandy, with power to appoint and dismiss officials.⁽⁵⁾

In any matters of complexity or difficulty the council would consult with Edmund, whether he was in France or England, and this was shown in

(1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26063/3225.

(2) For example, work on a mill in Maisoncelles, with the vicomte Pierre Bruart paying Richard le Charretier, a carpenter, 16 livres tournois on 6 May 1430 (AN, KK 1338/38).

(3) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 3654/303 given under Edmund's seal on 1 July 1431, at the siege of Louviers. Gombault was an experienced local official who had served the English as vicomte and receiver at Pont-de-l'Arche during the 1420s (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.103).

(4) Given at Calais under Edmund's sign manual (BN, Ms. Fr. 26057/2066).

(5) He was acting as such 26 October 1436 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26061/2971).

the most important case involving Mortain, the issue of the town's fortification. The castle of Mortain lay in the marches of Normandy between the important fortresses of Avranches to the west and Domfront to the east. An old fortification, temporarily lost to the enemy in the early 1430s, it was unable to shelter the people of the town or provide proper defence.⁽¹⁾ In fact by 1433 the decision had been taken to demolish it though this was not to be carried out until 1435.⁽²⁾ Under these circumstances it was decided by Edmund and his council to repair and fortify a maison forte at Mortain to provide for the town's defence. A majority of the inhabitants consented to the levying of the guet et garde to pay for this but a small group appealed against the tax, claiming such an action violated customary rights. Despite their opposition Edmund ordered his officials to proceed with the levy and a total of 2,212 livres tournois was collected, enabling ditches to be deepened and the house repaired.⁽³⁾ This action resulted in a judicial appeal by the minority group to the court of law of the Norman council, but the court ruled that it had not the authority to try the case, which must be held over until the next Échiquier was assembled. Mortain's officials were to deliver a pledge to Lord Scales and make a deposition of their case before the bailli of the Cotentin by July 1435.⁽⁴⁾ The dispute did not come up until the revived Échiquier of 1448 when an

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- (1) The condition of the castle is described in BN, Ms. Fr. 26059/2537 (28 May 1435). The French had briefly captured the old castle and attempted to fortify it (June 1432). It was recaptured by the English a year later (BL, Add. Ch. 1126, 10990).
- (2) A force was supposed to have been sent out by 9 December 1433 when Elias of Longworth had delivered the castle to Hugh Spencer, bailli of the Cotentin. In fact the demolition was not underway until July 1435 (Inventaire de la Manche, II, 48, citing A 3938/10; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 26, f.183).
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26059/2537; 26060/2742.
- (4) Ibid. On 1 July 1435 Thomas Clingham (bailli of Mortain) instructed Richard Beaumont (the vicomte) to deliver to Jean Chastel 100 sols tournois for his journey to St-Lô to make the deposition before the bailli of the Cotentin: BN, Pièces Originales 789 (Clingham)/2.

arrangement for compensation was agreed between the two parties.⁽¹⁾

After the delivery of Maine to the French in 1448 the strategic position of Mortain became more vital and it was at this time that Edmund made the controversial decision to build a new castle there. His bailli, John Court, was stationed at Mortain with a mounted retinue to supervise the operation and Edmund himself visited the work of construction.⁽²⁾ The chronicler Robert Blondel described the work underway, a well-fortified tower surrounded by a strong ring of stakes; building was still in progress when the Breton forces launched their attack in July 1449.⁽³⁾

The circumstances of Edmund Beaufort's next major acquisition of property, the lordship of Chanteloup in the Norman Cotentin, are not clear. Chanteloup had been granted to John Gray by Henry V and on his death in 1427 had reverted to the crown. On 12 April 1427 it was regranted to William de la Pole, earl of Suffolk.⁽⁴⁾ The earliest reference to Beaufort taking possession of these lands is in February 1432.⁽⁵⁾ Suffolk was at this time trying to raise money for his ransom and had already sold virtually all his French lands. Bedford purchased the lordships of

(1) ADSM, Échiquier, 1448, Registre Manuel, f.405^V. Michael le Poullétier, representing Edmund, agreed to pay compensation to the appellants.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 888 (Court)/2, 3; ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 11/179.

(3) Oeuvres de Robert Blondel, 81-2.

(4) AN, JJ 173, f.312. The grant was to be enjoyed to a maximum value of 500 livres tournois a year; the lordship of Créances was specifically included in the donation.

(5) BN, Collection Clairambault 139/120 (3 February 1432).

Hambye and Dreux, Bertrand Entwhistle the barony of Bricquebec, and it seems likely that Suffolk also sold Chanteloup to Edmund, though no reference to such a transaction survives.⁽¹⁾

Chanteloup was an important and lucrative fief. In addition to the seat and castle of Chanteloup itself (to the north-east of Granville) it also comprised three other lordships, nearby Equilly (to the east of Granville), Appilly, much further south in the vicinity of Avranches (in the parish of St. Senier to the east of the town) and further north Créances (north of Coutances). The records of the information held at the death of John Gray survive in part; they reveal losses in rent due to war damage and it is unlikely that the lordship would have yielded the estimated maximum of 500 livres tournois a year.⁽²⁾ Particular damage had been caused in Appilly during the Anglo-Breton war that had ended in 1427 and the hôtel there had been completely destroyed.⁽³⁾

A badly damaged treasury délai of 17 May 1432 granted Edmund Beaufort a year's respite in performing homage for his lordship of Appilly in the Cotentin, noting that he had been occupied in the king's service at Louviers and had now returned to attend the king in England.⁽⁴⁾ The

(1) The regent purchased Hambye and Dreux for 3,500 marks on 13 November 1431 (Beaurepaire, Recherches sur Jeanne d'Arc, 92, n.1).

(2) The treasury ordered an information on the lands of Chanteloup, Créances, Appilly and Equilly, lately held by John Gray, in a mandate of 29 July 1427 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 10, f.155). The information had been carried out by 4 July 1428 but the declarations of rents and revenues survive only for Chanteloup, Appilly and Equilly. Chanteloup yielded a cash revenue of 82 l. 10s t. a year, Appilly 69 l. 18s t., Equilly 38 l. 2s t. With the addition of a small number of rents payable in kind the total yield was a little over 200 l.t. (BN, Collection Clairambault 219, ff.15-25).

(3) BN, Collection Clairambault 219, f.15.

(4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26055/1817.

wording of the délai suggests that Edmund may have acquired the property late in 1431 (the siege of Louviers had ended on 25 October 1431).

However it was at the beginning of February 1432 that Edmund visited Chanteloup and after consultation with his captain, steward, receiver and others ordered his receiver to deliver 100 livres tournois to be used in certain repairs to the castle.⁽¹⁾ Richard Scales took over the captaincy of Chanteloup on 5 February 1432 with a wage of 100 livres tournois each year charged on the account of the receiver.⁽²⁾ Scales held the captaincy until 2 November 1433 when the post was taken over by Crespin du Marquis, bastard of Maugny.⁽³⁾ Maugny had been a servant and member of cardinal Beaufort's household during the latter's stay in France.⁽⁴⁾

The castle of Chanteloup was relatively small. A gateway was flanked by two towers and a larger keep with a small protective moat.⁽⁵⁾ The fortification of the castle may have been one of the objects of a government inquiry into Edmund Beaufort's French lands in 1433, when Norman officials claimed that Edmund and his servants had removed cannon, veuglaires and other ordnance from his former captaincy of Gisors.⁽⁶⁾ Chanteloup's garrison is referred to occasionally in the administrative

(1) BN, Collection Clairambault, 139/120.

(2) BN, Pièces Originales 1896 (Maunay)/43; L. Tardif, 'Les seigneurs et les capitaines du château du Chanteloup pendant l'occupation anglaise, 1418-49', Le Pays de Granville, IX (1913), 259-267.

(3) BN, Pièces Originales 1896 (Maunay)/43. The document shows that Raoullin Duhamel was acting as Edmund's receiver at Chanteloup at this date.

(4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.241.

(5) C.L. Salch, Dictionnaire des châteaux, 281. The central keep, constructed on three floors, shows evidence of repair from the fifteenth century.

(6) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.307.

records. In 1432 they were involved in a dispute with the bailli of the Cotentin over the delivery of two brigands; an unsuccessful attempt was made against the castle during the French uprisings of 1435-6.⁽¹⁾

The comté of Mortain and the lordship of Chanteloup formed the extent of Edmund Beaufort's earliest estate in France.⁽²⁾ They made him an important landowner in western Normandy at a time when he held little of any value in England. In as far as scanty evidence permits a picture to be drawn, Edmund showed a keen interest in supervising his affairs and maintaining the rights of his property, taking cases to the court of law of the Norman council if necessary.⁽³⁾ However his position in Normandy was to be transformed by a major new grant on 23 December 1435, of the extensive comté of Harcourt in eastern Normandy that had previously been held by the Regent Bedford.⁽⁴⁾ This major holding elevated him to one of the principal landowners in France and resulted in a reorganisation of his whole estate administration. It also brought a variety of attendant legal problems which were to delay considerably the full realisation of the grant.

The comté of Harcourt, which had been granted to Thomas Beaufort duke of Exeter by Henry V and after his death had passed into the hands of

(1) R. Jouet, La résistance à l'occupation anglaise, 48, 134, 138.

(2) The letters of appointment of Raoul Auguy as auditor of accounts of all Edmund Beaufort's properties in France list his titles in full, 'Emond de Beaufort, Conte de Mortaing, Seigneur de Chantelou, appilli, esquilli et Criences': BN, Ms. Fr. 26057/2066 (Calais, 15 May 1433).

(3) On 27 July the court of law of the Norman council decided in favour of Beaufort in a case concerning Edmund's right to a charge of 15 l.t. a year on the seigneurie of Lauine, north of Coutances. He was also awarded arrears of seven years rent. Although the document does not indicate the right on which his claim was based it was probably his nearby lordship of Créances. The royal sergeant was sent from Coutances to obtain the sum owed from the owner Degory Gamel. Gamel however claimed that he did not have the money and when the sergeant attempted to arrest his goods forcibly prevented him (BL, Add. Ch. 3825).

(4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 75, f.5.

John, duke of Bedford, was recognised by contemporaries as a prize worthy of a prince.⁽¹⁾ The comté of Harcourt had been founded in 1338 around six châtellenies, Harcourt itself, nearby Brionne and Boisseyle-Châtel, Elbeuf, on the Seine south of Rouen, Lillebonne and Gravenchon, both in the Pays de Caux.⁽²⁾ In addition to these estates were numerous smaller fiefs, dependent on the comté, two of the more important being the lordships of Quatremare and Routot; this whole body of lands was granted to Thomas Beaufort by Henry V.⁽³⁾ However the estate was to enjoy a totally new territorial addition under the ownership of its next English lord, John duke of Bedford. Bedford, who had held Harcourt from 12 May 1427, secured on the death of the earl of Salisbury at Orléans³ (4 November 1428) the latter's lordships of Le Neubourg, Combon, La Rivière-Thibouville and Boincourt.⁽⁴⁾ These nearby territories, which had had no previous connection with the comté of Harcourt, were welded by Bedford into one administrative unit.⁽⁵⁾

A valor drawn up for Harcourt for the year 1433-4 contained an impressive list of revenues. The vicomté of Harcourt itself yielded 2,300 livres tournois, Elbeuf 1,100 livres tournois, Lillebonne 1,520 livres tournois, La Rivière-Thibouville, Boincourt, Le Neubourg and

(1) C.T. Allmand, 'The Lancastrian land settlement', 465.

(2) A. Jardillier, 'Harcourt, Bourg de France', Nouvelles de l'Eure, XLVI (1972-3), 7.

(3) Calendar of Norman Rolls, 728 (1 July 1419).

(4) Le Neubourg, Combon and La Rivière-Thibouville had been held by Salisbury since 1 June 1419 (Calendar of Norman Rolls, 698). The comté of Harcourt had been regranted to Bedford, after the death of Thomas Beaufort duke of Exeter in 1426, on 12 May 1427, and Bedford's estate officials had taken possession in the same month (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.55). Bedford's ownership of Le Neubourg, Combon, La Rivière-Thibouville and Boincourt, through a grant to his wife Anne of Burgundy, was authorised in letters of 5 July 1430 (ibid., 22, f.163). Bedford had in fact been enjoying the profits of these lordships from the death of Salisbury on 4 November 1428 (A. Plaisse, La baronnie du Neubourg, 309, citing an extract from the receiver's account 1428-9).

(5) A. Plaisse, op.cit., 309-16.

Combon together produced 1,183 livres tournois, Quatremare and Routot 500 livres tournois, the lordship of Auvers 500 livres tournois, and Calleville 50 livres tournois. The sum total amounted to 7,153 livres tournois.⁽¹⁾ Such figures would be considerably reduced by the many expenses charged on their receipt for the running of the estate and a clear revenue would be much lower. To take one example, the lordship of Lillebonne (for which a receiver's account survives for 1429-30) bore a variety of charges both for administrative and maintenance purposes. Over 212 livres tournois were spent on repairs and furnishings to the castle of Lillebonne and payments of wages were made to a variety of officials including the captain, vicomte, steward and a lawyer and member of Bedford's council for the Pays de Caux. The clear profit after these expenses had been deducted amounted to some 604 livres tournois.⁽²⁾

The territorial extent of the comté of Harcourt under Bedford's administration could not be expected to continue after the regent's death. The addition of the lordships of Le Neubourg, Combon, Boincourt and La Rivière-Thibouville was, in respect of French land law, artificial and these lands would in all likelihood be detached from any new grant that was made. The serious military reverses in the Pays de Caux in 1435-6 brought a further blow in the loss of the lordship of Lillebonne to the enemy.⁽³⁾ Other properties disappeared to rival claimants. The seigneurie of Auvers was restored to John Robessart after he had petitioned the English council. Robessart had in fact been granted Auvers by Henry V

(1) Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, ii, 554.

(2) ADSM, E (Archives non classées) Compte de Lillebonne 1429-30.

(3) The majority of holdings in the seigneurie were concentrated north of the Seine between Bolbec and Gravenchon (ibid.).

but both the duke of Exeter and the duke of Bedford had exercised the claim of French land law to reincorporate it into the comté of Harcourt, Robessart adding tellingly that both were such powerful men that he had no wish to contest this. However Bedford had now died, and in letters patent given at Westminster on 11 November 1435 Robessart's ownership of Auvers was restored.⁽¹⁾

An additional problem was caused by the settlement Bedford himself had tried to make, just before his death, of all his lands and possessions in France. The regent had left no heirs and the right to his estates was held in tail male. Bedford, in his will, had granted to his wife Jacquetta of Luxembourg all his goods in France. He had also attempted to settle his landed property on her, with the exception of the lordship of La Haye-du-Puits in the Cotentin which he made over to his bastard son Richard.⁽²⁾ As part of this arrangement Bedford had granted the comté of Harcourt together with the lordships of La Rivière-Thibouville and Le Neubourg to his wife Jacquetta with the sole provision that if she remarried it was to be to a subject of the king of England.⁽³⁾

This settlement was not recognised in England and a division of Bedford's estates resulted in Humphrey duke of Gloucester receiving the

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- (1) The original grant to Robessart, of the lordships of St - Sauveur-le-Vicomte, Néhou and Auvers in the Cotentin, had been made on 28 March 1420 (Calendar of Norman Rolls, 763). Robessart's petition over Auvers was granted in a council warrant allowing him the same right of ownership that had been authorised in the previous grant. The warrant, partially damaged, is filed in PRO, E28/57. It is undated, but a record of the council warrant and the date survive from the Norman treasury in AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 5, f.69.
 - (2) Ch. de Beaurepaire, Fondations Pieuses du Duc de Bedford, 6. Bedford's will was made on 10 September 1435. He died at Rouen four days later.
 - (3) Authorised by Bedford in letters patent given at Rouen on 2 September 1435 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 22, f.395).

lordship of La Haye-du-Puits and Edmund Beaufort Harcourt.⁽¹⁾ However by the time of the grant of the comté of Harcourt to Edmund, on 23 December 1435, Jacquetta, duchess of Bedford, was already in possession of the property.⁽²⁾ Throughout 1436 Jacquetta administered both Harcourt and La Rivière-Thibouville in much the same way as her husband had.⁽³⁾ She seems to have taken an active interest in matters of estate business, ordering special repairs or appointing new officials.⁽⁴⁾ It was with some difficulty that Edmund's agents finally took possession of Harcourt at the beginning of 1437. In letters patent of 5 January 1437, on the authority of the king's lieutenant-general, Richard duke of York, it was ordered that since Edmund Beaufort had been granted the comté of Harcourt for over a year but had not yet been able to secure access to it, the captain of Harcourt, John Stanlaw, was to allow entrance immediately to all his officers.⁽⁵⁾ These instructions resulted at last in the

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- (1) This division of property is referred to in N. Farin, Histoire de la ville de Rouen (Rouen, 1738, 3 vols.), III, 352. The vagueness of Bedford's will was to cause his executors much trouble and litigation (Carleton Williams, My lord of Bedford, 247, 275). One instance of the confusion that followed Bedford's will is found in the records of the Célestins at Rouen, where the regent's hôtel, Joyeux Repos, was donated to the order by four different claimants, Edmund Beaufort, the crown, Humphrey duke of Gloucester and Jacquetta of Luxembourg (ADSM, G 9208/16). Jacquetta had received a royal grant to enter her dower lands in England and Calais on 6 February 1436 (WAM, 12164; Calendar of French Rolls, 309). However this did not include Bedford's French lands.
- (2) She had evidently taken possession very soon after her husband's death. A sale of woods was carried out on behalf of Jacquetta of Luxembourg, duchess of Harcourt (18 November 1435): BN, Pièces Originales, 985 (Davy)/9.
- (3) ADE, E 3941. In this account for Neubourg, 1436-7, Jean le Tellier, the receiver, was acting as vicomte of Harcourt, Elbeuf, Le Neubourg and La Rivière-Thibouville. The wages of the estate officials were charged on the receipt of the vicomte of Harcourt (A. Plaisse, La baronnie du Neubourg, 316-17).
- (4) Small repairs were normally ordered on the authority of the vicomte. However repairs to the mills of La Rivière-Thibouville were made on the instruction of letters patent of Jacquetta of Luxembourg herself, (ADE, E 3941, f.32).
- (5) BL, Add. Ch. 3791.

establishment of Edmund's own men in the comté. His stewards, William Power, Thomas Clerc and Raoul Auguy, reappointed John Stanlawe as bailli and captain of Harcourt on 10 January 1437.⁽¹⁾ On 21 January Simon Alain was appointed receiver of the comté.⁽²⁾ From this time onwards the estates of Harcourt and those of Le Neubourg and La Rivière-Thibouville (which were still held by Jacquetta) were severed.⁽³⁾

Although Edmund Beaufort was now finally in possession of Harcourt, Jacquetta refused to accept his right to the comté and the result was a long legal battle. The account of Le Neubourg for the year 1437-8 records that the count of Mortain had recently taken possession of the comté of Harcourt and that his rights of ownership were contested by the duchess of Bedford; Mortain's officials had paid a pledge of 300 livres tournois (from the receipt of Harcourt, Michaelmas 1436) pending any legal action, to be allowed to continue the administration of the comté without interference.⁽⁴⁾ Jacquetta, supported by her new husband Richard Woodville, continued to press her own claim to the comté.⁽⁵⁾ In 1441 she brought an action of nouvel disseisin against Edmund in the court of law of the Norman council at Rouen.⁽⁶⁾ The timing of this was significant. From

(1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.79.

(2) Ibid., 14, f.77.

(3) La Rivière-Thibouville and Le Neubourg were to remain in the possession of Jacquetta of Luxembourg and her husband Richard Woodville until Le Neubourg was lost to the French early in April 1444 (A. Plaisse, op.cit., 317-18).

(4) ADE, E 3941, f.58.

(5) In a dispute over the right of presentation at the vacant cure at the church of St. Pierre de Theillement both Edmund and Jacquetta claimed the right through holding title to the comté of Harcourt. The case was heard at an assise at Pont-Audemer and the verdict went in Edmund's favour: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.75 (25 February 1438).

(6) Edmund was ordered to make the pledge by royal letters given at Rouen on 29 September 1441 against the action of nouvel disseisin brought by the duchess of Bedford and her husband Richard Woodville. An assise at Rouen on 13 June 1444 noted that the sum had been delivered by the earl of Shrewsbury and Richard Frogenhall, bailli and captain of Harcourt (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 15, f.193).

1439-40 Edmund Beaufort had been resident in Normandy and a principal member of the governing council. However he had now left France, while Jacquetta's husband Richard Woodville had returned to Normandy as one of the chief members of the army of the new lieutenant-general Richard duke of York. Edmund had to find a large pledge to serve as guarantee and to allow the sequestration of the comté while the case was being heard.⁽¹⁾

Although no record of the verdict on the dispute survives, Jacquetta's action was evidently unsuccessful for Edmund was to retain possession of Harcourt until its loss to the French in September 1449, though her claim may have been raised again in the Échiquier of 1448.⁽²⁾

The legal dispute between Edmund Beaufort and Jacquetta and her husband Richard Woodville was further complicated by an arbitrary detachment by the crown of a number of fiefs dependent on the comté of Harcourt, principally Quatremare, Routot and Auvers.⁽³⁾ These were in fact granted to Edmund by the king and council at Westminster on 19 March 1437, only for him to find that the donation had been anticipated by Richard duke of York, who as the king's lieutenant-general in Normandy had already granted the lands to Jacquetta and Richard Woodville (to be enjoyed to a yearly value of 1,000 salus d'or of rent). A new council grant of 2 April 1437 could only confirm Edmund's right of title (in tail male) after the original grant to Jacquetta and Woodville (for term

(1) The comté was referred to as under sequester on 26 November 1443 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26071/4909).

(2) ADSM, Échiquier 1448, Registre Manuel, f.92^V.

(3) The full list included Quatremare, Criquebeuf-la-Campagne, St. Cyr-la-Campagne, St. Pierre-de-Lierroult (vicomté of Pont-de-l'Arche), Routot (vicomté of Pont Authou), Combou, Le Troncq, La Haye-du-Theil, Marmorin, Grosley-sur-Risle, Conchez, Le Tilleul-Othon (vicomté of Beaumont-le-Roger), Auvers (vicomté of Carentan). With the exception of Quatremare, Routot and Auvers, these were small fiefs; St. Cyr-la-Campagne and St. Pierre-de-Lierroult only yielded 41 2s tournois for the term of Michaelmas 1443 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 15, f.193). For the location of these properties see Map 12.

of life) had expired or if the revenues from the lands exceeded the yearly total of 1,000 salus d'or.⁽¹⁾ Despite the earlier grant Edmund did in fact have a prior claim on these properties through French land law since they were all traditionally held by the count of Harcourt and the terms of his own grant of 23 December 1435 had included all fiefs and arrière fiefs dependent on the comté.⁽²⁾ Although evidence is scanty it seems that his agents successfully took possession of the majority of these properties soon after their occupation of Harcourt.⁽³⁾

However in an already confused situation a number of these lordships had also been disposed of by additional royal grants and were now in the possession of new owners. Foremost among these was the wealthy seigneurie of Auvers which had been restored to John Robessart in November 1435. Edmund Beaufort had appointed Guillaume Poisson, a former receiver at Carenton, his steward of Auvers on his arrival in Normandy in June 1438.⁽⁴⁾ However he was not able to gain access to this estate until he had contested the rights of ownership with Robessart in the court of law of the council at Rouen. The case was in progress by July 1441, when the mayor of London and the French secretary were instructed to gather

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- (1) BN, Pièces Originales 65 (Angleterre)/19. This, the original grant from the English council, with the great seal still partially attached, is holed in a number of places, but the omissions can be supplied from the analyse of the document in AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 5, f.39. The manuscript refers to the lands as confiscated from Jean d'Harcourt (the exiled duke) and his wife Jeanne d'Alençon; this was a small slip, Harcourt's wife being Marie d'Alençon.
- (2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 75, f.5. Quatremare and Routot had been included in the grant to the first English owner of the comté, Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter, and had been held of the comté ever since (Calendar of Norman Rolls, 728).
- (3) On 10 January 1437 John Stanlaw was appointed bailli of Harcourt, Quatremare and Routot (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.79). Edmund Beaufort performed homage for the comté of Harcourt and these other fiefs to the king at Kennington on 5 July 1437 (ibid., 42, f.213).
- (4) Ibid., 13, f.139. The appointment was renewed in letters given at Rouen on 12 March 1440.

testimony and evidence on the dispute for the benefit of the court in Rouen.⁽¹⁾ By October 1441 the case had evidently been decided in Beaufort's favour for he was granted a delay by the Norman treasury in performing homage for his lordship of Auvers.⁽²⁾ Edmund seems to have faced similar problems with some of the other smaller fiefs which had again reverted to other landholders.⁽³⁾

Despite the handicap of the lack of any of the Norman legal records it is clear from the variety of information that does survive that Edmund Beaufort faced extraordinary difficulties in the realisation of this important grant. Such problems were untypical in that Harcourt was an unusually loosely-knit comté and much confusion had been caused by Bedford's own attempts to secure its possession for his wife. Faced with these obstacles he seems to have continued with tenacity and determination to take full possession of the comté. In this he was aided by a resurgence of English fortunes in the Pays de Caux. The castle of Lillebonne was recaptured by Fulkes Eyton at the end of 1437. Restored to the comté of Harcourt, he placed a garrison in it under the command

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- (1) Letters had been sent to John Pattesle, mayor of London, and Gervais le Vulre, French secretary, ordering them to discharge their commission concerning evidence for the barony of Auvers on 6 July 1441 (PRO, SC8/57/71). Some detail of the case, in which Robessart and Beaufort claimed Auvers by virtue of royal grant, was enrolled on the commission of authority for the inquiry on the French Rolls (16 July 1441): PRO, C76/123, m.6.
- (2) BL, Add. Ch. 14430 (16 October 1441). Robessart contested this judgment in the Échiquier of 1448: BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.31^v (payment to Pierre Poolin for his services to the court during the process in the Échiquier between the duke of Somerset and John Robessart concerning the lordship of Auvers).
- (3) The fief of Grosley-sur-Risle, which had been subsequently granted to Robert de l'Est, had been returned to Edmund by 25 May 1441, together with an obligation for a return of the profits of the lordship up to 15 February 1441 (ADSM, Tabellionage de Rouen, 1440-1, f.130).

of Robert Smart.⁽¹⁾ However most of the lordship of Lillebonne remained in enemy hands and payment of the soldiers' wages had to be charged on the receipt of the vicomté at Harcourt.⁽²⁾

The acquisition of the comté of Harcourt, Edmund's first major land holding in eastern Normandy, led to the formation of a council at Rouen to run his affairs. Two lawyers, resident in Rouen, were appointed on 16 January 1437 by his stewards.⁽³⁾ Pierre Petit became receiver-general of all the Norman estates and Raoul Auguy took the post of treasurer; revenues from all the lands were now deposited in a central treasury at Rouen.⁽⁴⁾ In addition to drawing on this new establishment, Edmund found it useful to charge many of his expenses on the receipt of the vicomté of Harcourt, conveniently near Rouen.

The castle of Harcourt, protected by deep ditches, was formed by a semi-circle of walls with six towers culminating in a strong fortified gatehouse. At the far end the main body of the castle completed the circle with an additional ditch separating it from the outer walls. As

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- (1) The earliest reference to Robert Smart holding the captaincy of Lillebonne for Edmund Beaufort is a receipt for 46 livres tournois wages for the terms of Easter and Michaelmas 1440 from Audry Beauquesne, vicomte of Harcourt (BN, Pièces Originales 2661, Scemart, dated 17 December 1440). Further quittances survive from 18 February 1443 - 18 January 1444 in BN, Collection Clairambault 200 (Smart)/10, 82, 84.
- (2) Ibid.
- (3) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.75. Pierre de Gammille and Laurent Guedon were appointed with a pension of 20 livres tournois each year to be drawn from the vicomté of Harcourt. The pension was paid every half year: BN, Pièces Originales 1423 (Guedon)/13 (a receipt of 10 October 1439).
- (4) A receipt from Pierre Petit, receiver-general, was issued for 400 livres tournois delivered by Audry Beauquesne, vicomte of Harcourt, for the Michaelmas term last passed (30 October 1437): AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.73. A quittance from Edmund Beaufort in July 1437 for having received a gold belt, studded with pearls, diamonds and rubies, for the use of his wife, referred to his treasurer-general as Raoul Auguy. The belt, made by a local craftsman at Rouen, was valued at 249 1 9s 6d tournois (Inventaire de la Manche, II, 48, citing A 3938/11). Walter Smith was acting as Beaufort's auditor of accounts at Rouen on 7 June 1438 (BL, Add. Ch. 11998).

seat and centre of administration of the comté it had a separate accounting-house within the walls. For Edmund the castle offered him his first real caput for his properties. He was in frequent residence during his long stay in France from 1438-40, continually from October 1438-February 1439 and intermittently through the rest of 1439 and 1440.⁽¹⁾ His copy of the treaty that was drawn up between him, in his capacity of captain-general of Anjou and Maine, and the French dukes of Alençon and Anjou, was sealed at Harcourt on 2 January 1439.⁽²⁾ Frequent repairs and improvements were carried out on the castle on his orders. Glass was brought in for the chapel, horses collected for works of drainage and cartage.⁽³⁾

Charges on the vicomté of Harcourt became an important means of operation for Edmund's account. Supplies and stores were frequently delivered to the earl and his household at Rouen. Wheat, oats, cider, were among the commodities regularly brought from Harcourt to Rouen by one of his servants.⁽⁴⁾ Similarly he often ordered provisions to be sent to his beaufrère Talbot when he was stationed in Rouen.⁽⁵⁾ Again when Edmund was commanding the siege of Harfleur in the autumn of 1440 a stream of goods were being

(1) Edmund was at the castle by 14 October 1438, when he gave instructions for William Wylde, captain of Harcourt, to be paid 18 livres tournois wages: BN, Pièces Originales 3050 (Wylde)/2. The same Wylde, described as portier of the castle, was receiving wages on 15 September 1439: BN, Pièces Originales 249 (Beauquesne)/5. For wheat being provided for Beaufort's household at Harcourt in June 1440, see BN, Ms. Fr. 26071/4816.

(2) BL, Add. Ms. 11542, f.90.

(3) BL, Add. Ch. 1479 (2 February 1439), 3895 (12 April 1440).

(4) Instructions for oats to be delivered to Edmund's servant Richard Thornes were given at Rouen under the earl's sign manual on 7 June 1440 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4056). Also wheat was delivered to Thornes, for the needs of Beaufort's household at Rouen: BN, Pièces Originales 1017 (Dorset)/6 (Rouen, 20 April 1440); similarly orders were despatched to Martin Bezu, vicomte of Elbeuf, to send cider for the earl's household: BN, Pièces Originales 335 (Bezu)/18 (11 February 1440).

(5) Oats and wheat were delivered to Talbot, at Rouen, from the vicomte of Harcourt on a number of occasions: BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/3956 (12 February 1440), 26071/4816 (April 1440).

conveyed from Harcourt for his household and their horses.⁽¹⁾ Many other items were charged on the receipt of the vicomté, loans to particular individuals, gifts to religious orders and pensions.⁽²⁾

By this period the comté of Harcourt had become the centre of Edmund's attention both as his principal French estate and for his notion of 'estate' in general. One particular project provides a good example of this, the plan for the construction of a maison forte on the Seine at Elbeuf.⁽³⁾ Such completely new building works were rare during the English occupation, though there is in fact no evidence that this particular residence was ever completed. At the time the document was drawn up the land was in the process of being purchased; the plan of design is undated but was probably made between 1438 and 1440.⁽⁴⁾

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- (1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/3956, 26071/4816. The supplies despatched from Harcourt during the siege included gunpowder (BN, Ms. Fr. 23189, f.26, no.43, printed in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, i, 308-9).
- (2) Loans are occasionally recorded. A quittance of Wortier Stotfield referred to the assignment of 40 salus d'or from the vicomté of Harcourt, a loan from the earl of Dorset, 28 March 1440 (BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4005). Donations to religious orders occur frequently. A mandate for wheat to be supplied to the Chartreux of Rouen, '... que nous avons donnee en charitie', was given under Beaufort's sign manual at Rouen on 1 March 1440; similarly wheat was to be delivered to the convent of Notre-Dame des Carmes at Pont-Audemer (18 April 1440): BN, Ms. Fr. 26066/3971, 26067/4031. Such were special gifts and quite distinct from charges on the vicomté in the form of payment to certain religious houses (eg. the regular yearly payment to the Priory Notre-Dame du Parc d'Harcourt: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 29, f.33). As one would expect, annuities were also charged on the revenues of the comté, though with the absence of any estate accounts only chance references survive. A pension of 20 livres tournois each year was paid to Jeanne Doublet, dame de Saint-Pierre: BN, Pièces Originales 1019 (Doublet)/4, 5; BN, Ms. Fr. 26070/4687. Similarly a grant was made of two bushels of wheat each month to Jeanne de Hollande (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 13, f.135).
- (3) The original is to be found in BN, Ms. Fr. 20348, ff.200-202. A full transcript, discussion and introduction is provided in M.L. Régnier, 'Devis pour la construction d'une maison forte à Elbeuf-sur-Seine pendant l'occupation anglaise du quinzième siècle', Société de l'Histoire de Normandie, Mélanges, VI (1906), 333-350.
- (4) Edmund is styled 'le conte de Dorset, de Mortaing et de Harcourt', which dates the draft plan between May 1438 and June 1443 (when he was created Marquis).

The new residence was to be built on the banks of the Seine, its size roughly 70' by 33', to be protected by a moat and an outer wall with emplacements for crossbow and small guns. It was to be built on three main floors with, in addition, a cellar and two attic rooms. On each corner of a steeply sloping slate roof were towers, each with a small wooden turret. An inner courtyard had a well placed conveniently close to the kitchen; drainage from the kitchen and latrines ran into the moat. The inner rooms were partitioned in plaster with plaster chimneys; the windows were edged in slate. Careful provision was made for the defence of the building. A wharf and a staircase were to be constructed to allow the disembarkation of soldiers and animals from the river below. However the point of entry was to be protected by a draw-bridge and small moat. Walk-ways were to be made along the outer walls to allow the keeping of a watch both day and night.

The tone of this draft suggests both that it had been drawn up after careful consultation between the builder and Edmund and that specific points were to be referred back to the earl.⁽¹⁾ The residence was only a short river journey from Rouen (Edmund, like most noblemen, had his own barge); Elbeuf, one of the principal lordships of the comté of Harcourt, represented an important stage in the navigation of the lower Seine. The earl's own personal interest and pride in this new construction were demonstrated by the considerable display of his coat-of-arms, to be emblazoned on the window-ledges, corner towers and rooftop.⁽²⁾ Certain details of design remain ambiguous; nevertheless, the

(1) Régnier, loc.cit., 347.

(2) Ibid., 342-3, 349.

initial estimate of 6,000 francs (6,000 livres tournois), which did not include the expenses of the purchase of the land or the construction of additional out-buildings, was a sign of the identification shown by Edmund with his French estates at a relatively late stage of the war.

The administration of the comté depended on Edmund's local officials, his receiver-general and council at Rouen and the supervision of the earl himself. The most important offices were the vicomtes at Elbeuf and Harcourt which remained in the hands of Frenchmen, Martin Bezu and Audry Beauquesne, and the bailli at Harcourt. This post was first held, in conjunction with the captaincy of Harcourt, by the Norman treasurer, John Stanlawe.⁽¹⁾ However Stanlawe's duties as treasurer prevented him performing his duties in person much of the time and on 21 September 1437 it was decided after consultation with Edmund and the deliberation of his council at Rouen that the appointment should be made of a '... notable, sage et prudent resident sur le lieu et cognoissans l'estat de ladit seigneurie...', in this case the lawyer Thomas Bodin.⁽²⁾ By April 1440 the office of captain and bailli was being held by an Englishman, Richard Frogenhall, and it remained in his hands until Harcourt fell to the French in September 1449.⁽³⁾

The first reference to Frogenhall, from Teynham in Kent, being in Edmund's service occurs in the summer of 1439 when he was serving in the earl's personal retinue.⁽⁴⁾ He was soon occupied in matters of

(1) Stanlawe's appointment was reaffirmed on 10 January 1437 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.79).

(2) Ibid., 29, f.33, with wages of 100 livres tournois each year.

(3) The earliest reference to Richard Frogenhall as bailli of Harcourt is on 12 April 1440 (BL, Add. Ch. 3895).

(4) ADSM, Fonds Danquin, Carton 3, II/3 (25 July 1439).

private business.⁽¹⁾ After his appointment as bailli of Harcourt, briefly interrupted when he and a small retinue joined his master at the siege of Harfleur, he remained in France after Edmund's departure attending to the affairs of the comté.⁽²⁾ The reasons for Frogenhall's rapid rise to favour remain conjectural, but it is clear that he was one of the most important of his master's servants; chamberlain of his household, he enjoyed the earl's trust and confidence, and his maintenance of the post of bailli and captain of Harcourt was a sign of the importance of the comté to its owner.⁽³⁾

Along with the bailli and vicomte were a number of other important local officials. Simon Alain was appointed receiver of the comté of Harcourt on 21 January 1437; he also acted on occasions as deputy of the vicomte.⁽⁴⁾ Lieutenants of both the vicomte and the bailli exercised a considerable role in local affairs.⁽⁵⁾ The office of keeper of the woods provided another important post.⁽⁶⁾ Overseeing the activities of these

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- (1) BN, Pièces Originales 1017 (Dorset)/4; instructions from Edmund to the vicomte at Harcourt to supply Frogenhall with oats for his horse on his arrival (24 February 1440).
- (2) BN, Pièces Originales 1252 (Frogenhall)/2 (12 October 1440). Frogenhall was present at the siege with eight lances and fourteen archers. He remained bailli at Harcourt after Edmund's departure from France at the end of 1440. In April 1442 he was paying carpenters for repairs made to the castle (ibid./3).
- (3) In 1449 Frogenhall was described as Edmund's chamberlain, 'le principal de son hostel, le plus prochain de sa personne et son bailli d'Harcourt' (Stevenson, Narratives of the expulsion, 493).
- (4) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.75, with wages of 20 livres tournois a year.
- (5) Jean le Tellier, lieutenant of Richard Frogenhall, bailli of Harcourt, was frequently occupied in the routine affairs of estate management, eg. certifying the arrival of a long roll of rope for the castle well in April 1440 (BN, Collection Clairambault 202 (le Tellier)/21).
- (6) Jean Davy, verdier of Harcourt, was appointed by Edmund's stewards Raoul Auguy and John Stanlawe in January 1437 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.75). Letters of Edmund Beaufort, given under the earl's seal, in London on 27 November 1437, appointed Thomas Alinaye verdier of Harcourt for life (BL, Add. Ch. 1178).

agents was Edmund's receiver-general at Rouen. This key post was first held by Frenchmen but after Edmund's return to England at the end of 1440 was occupied by Lewis Rede, a lawyer, who had first come into his master's service as an attorney in 1436.⁽¹⁾

On the occasions of Edmund's visits to France, the earl himself took an active interest in the management of his estates. He was frequently in Rouen 1439-40 both as an important member of the council and as captain and governor of the city from October 1439. In addition to his principal residence, the hôtel d'Harcourt, in the rue de la Vicomté, he was purchasing additional property in and around the city at this time.⁽²⁾ Edmund's own seal and sign manual were in frequent use, for the receipt of cash delivered from Harcourt, the sale of lands in the comté or in orders for a survey to revalue the assessment for rents in kind.⁽³⁾

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- (1) R.A. Griffiths, thesis cit., 394. Rede was acting as Beaufort's receiver-general in Rouen on 24 February 1443, when he sent instructions to Audry Beauquesne to pay arrears of the garrison's wages at Harcourt (BN, Ms. Fr. 26070/4747).
- (2) ADSM, Tabellionage 1439-40, f.112^v (John Salvain selling a heritage near Rouen to Beaufort for 110 salus d'or, on 9 September 1440); f.260 (Robert Jolivet confirming the sale of a manor in the parish of St. Gervais in the north-west of the city, for 400 salus d'or on 10 May 1440). One of the first acts of Charles VII on his arrival in Rouen was to grant Edmund's possessions in the parishes of St. Godard and St. Gervais to his chamberlain Pierre de Brézé: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 75, f.67 (11 November 1449).
- (3) Edmund issued a receipt to Audry Beauquesne for 800 livres tournois contained '... en notre chastel de harecourt' on 12 February 1439: BN, Pièces Originales 1017 (Dorset)/3. References to the purchase of lands occur occasionally. On 5 June 1440, at Rouen, the earl granted to Pierre Jobin lands around Villiers for a price of 60 livres tournois (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 15, f.195). Edmund was concerned by the effects of the economic depression prevalent during the last years of the English occupation. Orders for a revaluation of payments of rents in kind were given under his sign manual at Harcourt on 15 February 1440 (AN, KK1339/26). Such an appréciation was not concerned with the local variations of prices in different tabellionages but a complete readjustment based on valuations specified in Edmund's own mandate. This, a grand-assise, was held by assembled experts, the

The general condition of lawlessness affecting Harcourt, and many other parts of eastern Normandy, presented a constant problem. Harcourt lay on the large plain of Le Neubourg, ideal cavalry country that was easily infiltrated by enemy troops and brigands. Such dangers remained a part of the day-to-day administration of the comté but the situation seriously worsened during the 1440s and was reflected in a drastic loss of revenue from its lands.

Estate officials were frequently escorted by garrison troops from Harcourt as they went about their business. In July 1437 a party of Edmund's agents visiting mills near Brionne had a guard both from the garrison and men from the nearby town.⁽¹⁾ Indeed the frequent escort duties of the garrison meant that often the castle itself was dangerously undermanned. In February 1438 members of Edmund's council retained Jean de Ryan for two months for the guard of the castle of Harcourt; as the bailli and vicomte both had to make frequent journeys on behalf of the earl the castle was left '... en danger des ennemis qui frequentent en grand nombre le pays d'environ'.⁽²⁾ The captaincy was thus an important office and the annual wage of 300 livres tournois was the highest of any official in the comté.⁽³⁾ The wages of the soldiers retained were also

lieutenant of the bailli and officers from the demesne administration (Frondeville, La vicomté d'Orbec, 133-4). Such appréciations were carried out frequently during the 1440s (BN, Ms. Fr. 26067/4179, 16 December 1440; AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 15, f.189, 12 May 1444) and were a mark of the real economic problems affecting eastern Normandy. There had been a serious collapse of prices in 1439, wheat in Rouen dropping to a third of its value July-August 1439 (G. Bois, Crise du Féodalisme, 303).

- (1) The party had consisted of Audry Beauquesne (vicomte), Thomas Bodin (lawyer), Jean Burnel (a deputy of the receiver of the comté Simon Alain) and Jean Hort (the local sergeant). The escort consisted of three soldiers and armed men from the nearby town of Brionne: AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 14, f.73 (8 July 1437).
- (2) Ibid., f.173 (27 February 1438).
- (3) Ibid., f.77. The annual wage of the bailli was 100 livres tournois.

on the receipt of the vicomté, the strength of the garrison was maintained at a level of ten lances and thirty archers until the outbreak of war in 1449, when it was incorporated into the regular garrison system of Normandy.⁽¹⁾ Edmund was in frequent contact with his officers over the problems of defence and could recall individual officers of the garrison by name.⁽²⁾ Two of his letters written during the siege of Harfleur in 1440, provide an example of the problems that could occur.⁽³⁾ Instructions to Simkin Waller, lieutenant of the castle, urged the necessity of vigilance since a great number of the enemy were in the region, while Audry Beauquesne, the vicomte at Harcourt, was ordered to obtain the services of some twenty or thirty Englishmen to reinforce the garrison.⁽⁴⁾

After the loss of first Louviers and Conches (1440) and then Evreux (1441) the position of Harcourt worsened. A mandate from Edmund's receiver at Rouen to the vicomte of Harcourt concerning the urgent payment of the garrison's wages described the castle '... assise en la frontiere des ennemis et adversaires du Roy'.⁽⁵⁾ Enemy troops were often captured and

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- (1) Ibid., 15, f.191, payment of a month's wages to the ten lances and thirty archers of the garrison of Harcourt captained by Richard Frogenhall (28 December 1443).
- (2) A mandate from Edmund to the vicomte of Harcourt ordered him to pay Jean Col, Raoul Vyd, Thomas Tailleur, Thomas Grynley, Roger Mondy and Henry Pettington, 'nos archiers estans en notre chastel de harecourt', arrears of part of a month's wages: BN, Pièces Originales 1017 (Dorset)/5.
- (3) BN, Ms. Fr. 23189, f.26, nos. 44-5, printed and translated in Stevenson, Letters and Papers, II, i, 309-12.
- (4) Ibid. Crossbow bolts, arrow strings and other ordnance were also brought from Rouen to Harcourt to resist the threats: BN, Pièces Originales 3044 (Waller)/13 (26 October 1440).
- (5) BN, Ms. Fr. 26070/4747 (24 February 1443).

interrogated.⁽¹⁾ Other duties included the capture of brigands, one soldier being paid a special bonus for capturing one malefactor known as 'le roy des champs'.⁽²⁾ The truce of 1444 brought a measure of respite. After Edmund's arrival in Normandy in 1448 as the new lieutenant-general, new defensive measures were taken. Richard Frogenhall was stationed at Harcourt with a mounted retinue of twenty lances and sixty archers and the new governor was in frequent communication with the castle over measures of local law and order such as the capture of brigands and the rounding-up of troops vivans sur le pays.⁽³⁾ It was Frogenhall who finally agreed to a composition with the count of Dunois after a siege lasting from 1 - 14 September 1449.⁽⁴⁾

The growing damage caused by the war had a disastrous effect on rents during the early 1440s. An information held at Elbeuf on 10 February 1442 recorded the damage both from the French, who had captured Louviers, Evreux, Conches and Beaumesnil, and the army of Talbot, Scales and Fauconberg which had gathered at Elbeuf at the end of 1440 in an attempt

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- (1) Ibid./4706 (22 December 1442). The captain of Harcourt, having captured and interrogated enemy troops, sent a message to Pont-Audemer. Some months later fresh warnings were despatched to Pont-Authou and Pont-Audemer concerning the gathering of the enemy and the danger of treason: BN, Ms. Fr. 26071/4840 (31 August 1443).
- (2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 27, f.125.
- (3) BN, Pièces Originales 1252 (Frogenhall)/4: a quittance for three months' pay for his mounted retinue of twenty lances and sixty archers given at Harcourt on 19 July 1449. However Frogenhall also held the captaincy of the abbey of Ste. Catherine, just outside Rouen, and some of his troops seem to have remained at the abbey. Seventeen lances and twenty-seven archers of his retinue were mustered there on 19 June 1449 (BN, Ms. Fr. 25778/1835). After Edmund's return to France in 1448 messages were regularly being despatched to Harcourt: BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6020, 6038; BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.113 (message to Richard Frogenhall or his lieutenant concerning brigands and 'gens vivans sur le pays').
- (4) Beaucourt, Histoire de Charles VII, V, 8; BL, Add. Ch. 4068 (referring to an aide of 500 livres tournois levied in September 1451, part of the sum due to certain English for the surrender of Harcourt).

to counter the enemy advances.⁽¹⁾ The result of this was that the revenue from the vicomté had dwindled to less than half. Frequent attestations of loss of rent through depopulation are recorded, further affected by the loss of Le Neubourg to the French in 1444.⁽²⁾ Such a picture of dwindling or uninhabited parishes was common to much of eastern Normandy.⁽³⁾

Conditions improved somewhat after the truce of 1444. The estate accounts of the now French-held lordship of Le Neubourg record frequent contact with the officials of the comté of Harcourt.⁽⁴⁾ Edmund's estate administration remained active. The lordship of Le Troncq was repurchased from the French.⁽⁵⁾ Rents from a number of fiefs, due to Richard duke of York through his ownership of the comté of Evreux and the vicomté of Orbec, were reduced by York's officials because of the damage the area had suffered in the war.⁽⁶⁾ Soon after Edmund's return to the duchy of Normandy in 1448 he undertook a tour of the comté

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- (1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 9, f.224. The army of Talbot was intended for an attack on Louviers or Conches. Yet no such offensive was made and the army merely stayed in the area of Elbeuf for three months. Talbot's lack of activity was probably caused by low morale and desertion among his troops (A.J. Pollard, thesis cit., 175).
- (2) An attestation of June 1443 revealed the destruction of lands in the region of Escardville by the garrisons of Evreux and Louviers. A similar attestation, of 14 December 1444, recorded that Boissey-le-Chastel was uninhabited because of the enemy occupation of Louviers, Evreux and le Neubourg (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 15, f.191).
- (3) G. Bois, Crise de Féodalisme, 306; Frondeville, La Vicomté d'Orbec, 201.
- (4) ADE, E 3942 (1444-5), f.17^v, referring to a journey of the receiver of Le Neubourg to consult with the English at Harcourt.
- (5) The purchase was made by Clement du Bosc, steward of Harcourt, by appointement with the officers of the lord of le Neubourg, for 18 livres tournois: ADE, E 3944 (1445-6), f.16 .
- (6) These charges ^{were} on the fiefs of La Herpinière (valued at 40 livres tournois a year), Le Mesnil-Pipart (53s 4d tournois), and Les Neufs Moulins (41s 7d tournois) in the vicomté of Beaumont-le-Roger and the fief farm of Canteloup in the vicomté of Orbec (54 1 16s 4d tournois). They were previously payable to the crown, but the sums due had been remitted in royal letters of 14 December 1444 (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 4, f.205). After the grant to York Edmund's stewards had appealed that the rents could not be met because of the effects of plague and war damage. York's officials, having carried out informations in the area, accepted the appeal. In a mandate of 17 February 1447 they remitted the arrears due for the last two years, and reduced the total yearly charge to 52 l.t. (BL, Add.Ch.6978; BN, Ms.Fr.26076/5729).

of Harcourt (July-August 1448) to assess the impact of war damage for himself. At Elbeuf he heard a petition from the inhabitants of the parish of Saint Jean d'Elbeuf, and instructed the receiver at Pont-de-l'Arche to make a remission of 40 livres tournois from the aide to allow the repair of a badly damaged church (13 July).⁽¹⁾ A similar rebate was requested at Montfort (16 July).⁽²⁾

An accurate assessment of the value of the comté of Harcourt to Edmund Beaufort is impossible, lacking the crucial evidence from the estate accounts themselves, which have failed to survive. However the convergence of evidence from a variety of sources does allow certain conclusions to be drawn. Harcourt was clearly the central acquisition of his Norman estates and of all his properties the most closely identified with its owner. Despite considerable legal problems and the comté's vulnerability to French attack, he vigilantly maintained his rights and interests. The very insecurity of his possession was also reflected in the last major French land grant he was to receive, the comté of Maine, which was made on 19 July 1442 for a term of life only with an additional clause allowing for the territory's reversion to the crown in the case of a treaty with the French.⁽³⁾

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- (1) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/5968. Records of remissions from the fouage show a number of officers of the comté resident in the parish, including the warden of the woods of Harcourt and the sergeant of the woods of Elbeuf (BN, Ms. Fr. 25908/678).
- (2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/5971. Edmund had returned to his castle of Harcourt by the beginning of August 1448 (BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.118).
- (3) BN, Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises 3642/804.

Only fragmentary details survive on the administration of Maine under Edmund's officers which was centred at Le Mans, held by his bailli and captain, Osbert Mundeford; it was the seat of the governing council of the comté, as well as the earl's own receivers and estate officials.⁽¹⁾ The revenue actually derived from the comté at this late stage of the war, when less than a third of Maine was still in English hands, cannot have been high. But on the decision to cede Maine to the French, Edmund successfully held out for generous terms of compensation, a pension of 10,000 livres tournois a year, which was granted to him on 13 November 1447.⁽²⁾ Precedent for such an arrangement existed in the proposed compensation of Bedford on the resumption of Anjou and Maine to the royal demesne on the arrival of the young king in France.⁽³⁾ However the gift had been restored to the regent, without these terms being put into effect. The arrangement for its collection had been carefully worked out in accordance with a petition that he had submitted prior to the grant.⁽⁴⁾ To provide a better surety of collection it was to be charged on the first receipt of the quatrième, the tax on wine, beer, cider and other beverages, in the bailliages of Caen and the Cotentin. 6,000 livres tournois were assigned from the bailliage of Caen (3,500 livres tournois to be collected from the receiver at Caen, 1,200 from Bayeux, 900 from Falaise and 400 livres tournois from Vire), the other 4,000 livres tournois from the bailliage of the Cotentin (2,000 livres tournois from the

(1) In a grant of a délai to Guillaume Richart, holding lands in the bailliages of Le Mans, Mayenne and Sonnois in 1446, there is a reference to Edmund's officers in the comté of Maine taking temporary possession of the estate (AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 28, f.71).

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5834.

(3) See Journal de Clément de Fauquembergue, II, 368. It was proposed to grant the regent lands worth an equivalent value to those of Alençon, Anjou and Maine, some 40,000 francs (Rymer, X, 457).

(4) BN, Ms. Fr. 26077/5834: referred to in the grant 'de la quelle il nous a humblement supplie et Requis'. An earlier oral promise of compensation had been undertaken by the king, which was to be met by this donation.

receiver at Carentan, 600 livres tournois from St-Lô, 500 livres tournois from Coutances, 500 livres tournois from Valognes, 200 livres tournois from Avranches, 100 livres tournois from Condé-sur-Noireau, and 100 livres tournois from Mortain). These sums were to be collected at two-monthly intervals by Edmund's treasurer or appointed receiver. They were to receive prior assignment and in the event of unwarranted delay in payment Edmund would have the right of legal process against the receiver concerned. If at the end of the year's term (which was to commence from 30 September 1447) any deficit remained it was to be made good by the Norman treasury.

These scrupulous arrangements were matched by the efficiency of the collection of the pension once Edmund had reached France. Soon after his arrival in Normandy he had appointed his servant John Kyriell as his receiver for the collection of the money.⁽¹⁾ Kyriell, with an escort of three archers, was soon collecting the arrears in payment.⁽²⁾ However a problem was to develop in obtaining the full sum allocated. On 18 October 1448 the Norman treasurer Osbert Mundeford sent out orders to the receivers of the quatrième in the bailliages of Caen and the Cotentin to submit their accounts.⁽³⁾ Difficulty had arisen because the previous treasurer, John Stanlaw, had already made allocations on the quatrième for the term 1447-8 before the grant to Beaufort was made. With Edmund

(1) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.199: in letters given by the duke at Caen on 27 July 1448.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6018, 6051.

(3) BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.114^v.

having received some 8,450 livres tournois for the first year, arrangements were made to reassign the deficit. 1,050 livres tournois were to be raised from either the amendes levied by the Norman Échiquier, at present in session, or from the fines imposed by the recently-held réformation-générale. The remaining 500 livres tournois were to be assigned from the receipt of the receiver of the quatrième at Alençon.⁽¹⁾ Any future recurrence of such a difficulty was anticipated in further instructions from Mundeford to the receivers of the quatrième in Caen and the Cotentin ordering them to pay the first fruits of their receipt to the duke of Somerset.⁽²⁾ Collection of the second year's pension continued regularly, paid either to Kyriell or the treasurer of Edmund's household, and payments were still being received after the outbreak of war in July 1449.⁽³⁾

These careful and effective arrangements concerning the compensation for the comté of Maine were in marked contrast to the majority of private landowners who received nothing in the way of financial recompense. Moreover the French surrender of the yearly charge of 24,000 livres tournois agreed in the truce of Tours for the levying of the appatis, intended by Charles VII as some sort of remuneration to those English who had lost lands in Maine, was in fact reassigned by the Norman treasury and for the most part never reached the intended recipients.⁽⁴⁾ As a result much bitterness and resentment was focused on Edmund Beaufort himself.

(1) BN, Pièces Originales 2081 (Mundeford)/4 (10 November 1448); BL, Add. Ms. 11509, f.20.

(2) AN, Collection Dom Lenoir, 74, f.199 (5 December 1448).

(3) BN, Ms. Fr. 26078/6079, 6080; ADC, Fonds Danquin F 1407/1, 2; BL, Birch Ms. 4101, f.42 (July-August 1449).

(4) See above, 214-6.

Edmund's vigilant defence of his landed interest in Normandy may have created further enemies. Certainly his disputing and winning of the barony of Roncheville from Sir William Oldhall during the Échiquier of 1448 cannot have endeared itself to York's chamberlain who was later to reveal a violent personal animosity towards him.⁽¹⁾ What is undeniable is the importance to him of his French landed estate. Their titles and revenue were the foundation-stone of his standing among the nobility and his role in politics and government. After the death of Bedford he was to become the major landowner in France, in many respects a successor to the regent himself. Active and acquisitive, he benefited from the influence of his family to obtain the principal properties at the disposal of the crown. His landed interest was unmatched among the higher nobility. York, after his grant of the comtés of Evreux and Beaumont-le-Roger in 1445, was also to show an active interest in his properties, nominating his own baillis and repairing the castles of Conches and Beaumont-le-Roger.⁽²⁾ The revival of this border appanage was an important grant, but did not compare with the extent of Edmund's own estates. As such the loss of Normandy dealt his fortunes a double blow from which he was never to recover.

(1) See above 228,n.3. Roncheville was a lucrative barony in the vicomté of Auge: C. Hippeau, Dictionnaire Topographique du Département du Calvados (Paris, 1883), 241.

(2) BN, Ms. Fr. 26075/5539, 5597, 5609; 26076/5722, 5744.

CONCLUSION

The dispersal of patronage was the crucial test of any medieval king. In Henry VI's case the disposal of lands and offices in France was to assume an added significance through his own failure to take an active part in the war effort. In the event the Beauforts were to take a major share of rewards from the royal demesne. It is not possible to evaluate with any precision the overall financial benefits the family were to gain from commands and lands in France. Both John and Edmund were to lead plundering chevauchées that amassed booty and ransoms. Both were to receive major appanages in France. While we lack the figures for such profits of war, or incomes from land, their general significance was clear. They were prestigious honours, and the family was able to reward its own followers with smaller endowments. Detail of any attempts to cultivate an affinity, through retaining or payment of annuities, is for the most part lacking, and it seems unlikely that it was ever undertaken on the scale that York was to use during his second lieutenancy.⁽¹⁾ But in a more general sense one can identify an association between the Beauforts and certain soldiers and administrators in France, employed in their retinues, management of lands, and the conducting of ransom negotiations.

The family were not great military captains of the quality of Salisbury, Arundel or Talbot. Yet neither were they incompetent or corrupt. John Beaufort, a man of limited experience in the war and

(1) York's annuitants included John Stanlaw, the Norman treasurer, Henry Bouchier, count of Eu, Lord Scales and Lord Dudley, as well as Fastolf, Ogard and Oldhall (P. Johnson, thesis cit., 379-80).

preoccupied by the problems of his own estate, was an unfortunate choice for a major new command. Yet although his campaign lacked energy and vigour, it was consistent both with his own previous military experience, and more importantly the creation of a definite sphere of influence for the Beauforts in Anjou and Maine. The vested interest of the family in this area needs greater emphasis; it was to reflect one of the fundamental problems of the war effort, Henry's own failure to provide a clear and firm delegation of authority.

The career of Edmund Beaufort in France deserves a far greater reappraisal. His good service in the war, and the importance of his patrimony in Normandy and Maine, made him rightly eligible for high command. Able and ambitious, contemporaries were able to detect less attractive features: ruthlessness and a determination to protect and further his own interests. His reputation became overshadowed by the loss of Normandy and the bitter quarrel with Richard duke of York, and later chronicles attributed to him a divisive and corrupt mismanagement of the war.⁽¹⁾ Such criticisms were rooted in the widely held belief, both in France and England, that a better defence of Normandy could have been provided. Yet they were to obscure and distort the positive attempts of his administration to combat major problems in the organisation and financing of the English occupation. In the reign of Henry VII a rehabilitation of his role in government was attempted by the historian Polydore Vergil, who portrayed him as a loyal and

(1) Hall's Chronicle, 181, contains the charge that York's first lieutenancy in 1436 was delayed by the 'disdeyn and envy of the Duke of Somerset' (sic). Whatever the origin of this insertion, it confused the chronicler enough to assume the 'Erle of Mortayne' mentioned in the account of the relief of Calais was Edmund's son.

responsible royal councillor. While Vergil's account of the French war is muddled and inaccurate, he perhaps came close to the truth when he described the king's grief after Somerset's death at St. Albans for a man he regarded as a 'noble captain, who had fought valiantly for so many years against the Frenche men'.⁽¹⁾ Henry's favour towards Edmund was to remain steadfast, and probably stemmed not so much from the influence of the cardinal or Suffolk as his deep personal gratitude for the successful relief of Calais in 1436, an event which had greatly moved the young king. Henry's trust, whether described as preferential or partisan, was to lead to further commands and lands in France, and after 1450 a principal role in the government of England. It became an increasingly narrow and unbalanced distribution of patronage. As such it was to antagonise Richard duke of York, and provoke a violent conflict that wiped out the male line of the Beaufort family.

(1) Three Books of Polydore Vergil's English History, ed. H. Ellis (Camden Society, old series, XXIX, 1844), 96.

APPENDIX ONE

The principal lands and offices granted to the Beaufort family in France.

22 April 1427	The <u>comté</u> of Mortain granted to Edmund Beaufort.
2 August 1429	Edmund appointed constable of the royal army and king's lieutenant beyond the Seine in Normandy. Receives command of captaincies of Neufchâtel-en-Bray, Gournay and Gisors in the same month.
<u>Circa</u> August 1430	Grant of the <u>comté</u> of Perche to Thomas Beaufort.
16 April 1431	Thomas and Edmund appointed captains of the new army assembling at Sandwich.
23 December 1435	Edmund Beaufort granted the <u>comté</u> of Harcourt.
5 May 1436	Despatch of Garter to Edmund at Calais.
22 March 1438	Appointment of Edmund as captain-general and governor of Anjou and Maine. Has taken over captaincy of Alençon by 1 March 1438.
22 May 1439	Edmund and John Beaufort nominated as members of the governing council of Normandy.
June-July 1439	John Beaufort takes possession of captaincies of Cherbourg, Regnéville, Avranches, Tombelaine and Sainte-Suzanne.
<u>Circa</u> September 1439	John appointed captain of Falaise for life. To enjoy revenues of <u>guet</u> from the town.
1 October 1439	Edmund takes over captaincy of Rouen.
<u>Circa</u> December 1439	John Beaufort appointed 'lieutenant-general sur le fait de la guerre'.
5 May 1440	John granted appanage of St - Sauveur-Lendelin.

<u>Circa</u> October 1440	Despatch of Garter to John Beaufort at siege of Harfleur.
19 July 1442	Grant of <u>comté</u> of Maine to Edmund Beaufort.
30 March 1443	John appointed king's lieutenant of France and Gascony.
24 December 1446	Appointment of Edmund as king's lieutenant of France and Normandy.
13 November 1447	Compensation of 10,000 <u>livres tournois</u> a year awarded to Edmund for the loss of Maine.
21 September 1451	Edmund appointed captain of Calais.

APPENDIX TWO : The articles of war service of John Beaufort,
duke of Somerset

John Beaufort's articles of service were formally presented to the English council on 30 March 1443. On the same day a royal warrant instructed the chancellor Stafford to draw up a copy of the articles and the replies given to them, to be exemplified under the great seal. The roll, with the warrant sewn on to it, is now filed in the Public Record Office under C47/26/28. The opening item is very faded, and the opening words have been lost, but the remainder is reasonably legible. The original numeration of the roll has been followed, the only alteration being to place the margined responses at the foot of each item.

Articles of the erle of Somerset.

----- of the saide Erle to the Royaume of Fraunce and Duchie of Guyenne yif it please unto the heighnesse of our souverain lord that the said erle go thidre he wol be redy to do him service there and in the places where it shall please unto the heyghnesse of our said souverain lorde for to comand hym unto his power with the grace of allmyghty god in alle suche wise as he may be hable and likely to do unto oure said souveraine lorde such service as may be to the worship of his heighnesse and to the proffit and welfare of his both Reaumes and also to the worship of the saide Erle lyke as he hath allway said and written before this

iii Item and if it will please to oure said souverain lordes heighnesse that the saide Erle should do him service in his said Roiaume and duchie where as nede shuld bee there behoveth him diverse things therto as is

well to understande Of the whiche the chief and the principal is and that most may avant and whereinne the saide Erle trusteth must to prevail by of any thing elles that is to say the grace and the helpe of almyghty god which in all good enterprises and werks is most nedful and spedfull to be required and to that entent that it shoold please allmyghty god to part of his grace and help with hem that shuld laboure in his voiage for the recouvrer of our said souverain lordes right The saide Erle wolde beseche unto oure saide souverain lordes heighnesse that it myght please him of his grace to recomaunde unto the cotidiane prayer of holy church throughout his Reaume alle hem that labouren and shall labour for the recouvrer of our saide souverain lordes right which god for his mercy send hastily unto his handes if it be to the plesance of god

Responsio

It is graunted

iv Item and if it were so that it wold please unto oure saide souverain lordes heighnesse that the said Duc shold do him service in his saide Roiaume and Duchie it is so necessarie and spedfull to him for to have the good will and consentement of my lord of york therto which is lieutenant general of the seide Roiaume and Duchie that the saide Duc can in no wise see that he may take upon him the said voiage with his worship without the said consentement and good will Also withoute that had he cannot se that no power that he shuld have in his voiage myght be vallable nor effectually considered that my said lord of york hath the hool power before of all the saide Reaume and Duchie Wherfor the said Duc desireth that yif he shall take the saide voiage on hande that

my saide lorde of york may in all wise be maad prive therto and his gode wille had therinne

Responsio It is graunted and the king will write therto unto his saide cousin of york

v Item if the saide Duc sholde in this wise go unto the saide Roiaume and Duchie to serve oure saide souverain there as is said before him behovieth to have a suffisient puissance of men with him to putte bakk the ennemies and to rebuke hem withalle considered the hie courage that thai been of nowe and the grete distresse perill and danger that the said Roiaume and Duchie standeth inne allso in all partyes of hem which hath now been in case peril arvert sithen the conqueste of hem And as by liklyhode it is gretly to doubt leste they be in gretter distresse yet or socour and helpe may by possibilitee come there And yif it be so that a suffisant puissance of people go thidre And that it please to our souverain lord to entende to the pease in the treatie that is advised to be had therefore how it shall cause oure sourveraine lord to have his desire the more largely in the said treatie And yif him like not the offres of his adversaire in the said traitie he may with the saide puissance go forth with his conquest and prevail agayn his adversaire Where as and the said puissance be not suffisante that shall go thidre lest alle the contrarie herof folowe it was never so greet need to doubte as it is now

Responsio The king and he beith accorded of the noumbre of the armee

vi Item and for the said voiage him behoveth suffisance of ordenaunce and of artillerie with the people that longeth thereto and the cariage therof And therefor he desireth that it myght like unto the heighnesse of oure saide souverain lord to assigne such persones as shall best please unto his gode lordship that the saide Duc may comen with hem thereof And that he may have such quantite noumbre and provision therof with the saide people and cariage as betwix hem shall be thoght necessarie and Resonable for the saide voiage

Responsio Bowes and arrows beith ordeigned for and the Remnant is appoynted

vii Item and for the saide voiage him behoveth good and spedy shipping And that he may ship at the narrowese sea as is appointed and agreed for to availle his passage in shortnesse tyme that he be not tarried in this lande but lest while that may bee For upon long tarying and oft passages upon the brode sea myght folowe grete inconvenient as may be Raisin wel be understande which god defend for his heigh mercy And therupon he desireth to hath the place limited and appeynted that he was agreed to ship at and the same place declared in the endentures betwix oure souverain lord and him and the place that was appeynted to lande at

Responsio He shall ship at Portsmouth

viii Item as to certain ordonaunces in especial he desireth that for to be make the xx cartes Ribauldequines that he hath allwey desired to have with him he may have an C li upon account to be yelden in our said

souverain lordes Eschequier And therwith that he may have as many gonners as neden to occupie hem at necessitees in wages above the NOMBRE of his retinue with the cariage and stuff that longeth therof

Item that he may have the brigge of Barelles that hath be desired for him maad and caried with him at the kynges cost to passe the Rivers with that he shall fynde in his way and men knowing the properte and maner therof to dresse it and set it forth as many as shall nede in wages above the nombre of his retinue

Item that he may have the neue ordennaunce caried with him at our saide souverain Lordes coste with the maistres and makers therof at wages above his nombre of retinue to dresse it up when need shall bee Wherof the saide Duc hath do carie the more parte to hampton at his own coste as yit purposyng him to have alle with him in his voiage where that he go

Responsio

It is answered in the article above

ix Item and during the tyme that he shall abyde there and have charge there he may have as ample power and auctoritee as is declared in a minnit therof that the saide Duc yeneth is attached unto thees articles and undre suche name of auctoritee as may be accorded to by my lorde of york and alle by his good will and consentement in alle wise

Responsio

His power is appeinted by the advice of his counsail

x Item upon the thriddes and thriddes of thriddes whiche oure said
souverain lord asketh the saide Duc to be bounde to pay him as by the
indentures for this present voiage maade or to be maad betwix oure saide
souverain lorde and him may apier aplain The saide Duc desireth that
he may have allowed deducted and Rebated to him to his heirs and
executors upon the Counte of the said thridde and thridde of thriddes
Whereso ever it may be yolden All maner of Costes paiements gifts
rewardes and dispenses by him maad or be to maade for the werre which
he pretendeth to make in his present voiage be it upon Espies Guides
Scalers moyens to Recouvre places out of the ennemis handes into oure
saide souverain lordes handes be they spedde or fayled Heraults
pursuivants Trompettes messagers or other Riders or be it upon wages
of men of werre by him withholden or to be withholden and nought of hem
of the Numbre of this present Armie Of or hem of the same NOMBRE
when the half yer that thai shall be paied for nowe in Englande or
that depart shall be ended And or that have newe wages of the kynges
like as the said indentures of Or be it upon cariage ordennance
habillements of werre artillerie Or be it generally upon any other maner
of thing that in any wise may be estemed by the said Duc to availle
helpe or forther in the said voiage availe helpe or forther it or noght
Above the coste that the kyng will do upon the saide voiage And that upon
the said count the said Duc in his lif may be beleved as for
verificacion suffisient therof by a certificacion maade therupon undre
his own seal And that his heirs and executors may be beleved as for
such verificacion as is saide by there othe unto their knowledge And
that alle things at the saide counte as well in Receite ale in paiement
may be to hem alowed playnly and clerly deducted and rebated upon the
said certificacion and othe Withoute any contradiction or delay And
that oure saide souverain lord his heirs and executors and officers shall

have there action question and demande for the said thridde and thridde of thriddes and for the said counte unto the saide Duc his heirs and executors and to noon of his officers And that noon of his officers be bounde in any wise or held to answer or acompte for the saide thriddes or thriddes of thriddes or for the wages or any other goods that he or they shall receive at this tyme or at any tyme for or in the saide voiage but unto the saide Duc his heirs and executors and to noon other in Englande or in Fraunce or any other place of oure saide souverain lordes obeissance but that in all wise the saide Dukes officers may stande and be quitte thereof avenst the kyng his heirs executors and officers for evermore.

Responsio

It is graunted and in his power

xi Item the saide Duc desireth that he may hath graunted him of the kyng our said souverain lord that after that the saide duc have appointed with the saide souverain lord for his voiage that the appointment that shall be maade with him may be holde and kept unto him in alle wise And that he be not maunded nor countermaunded neither in this Reaume ner beyonde the sea to com nor go in to non other partyes than he hath appented for nor to take no journeis nor enterprises upon him ayenst his own will and entent but that he may stande in free choyse franchise and libertie to emploie himself and his retinue in oure saide souverain lordes service withinne the saide Roiaume of France and Duchie of Guyenne wher as him shall think best and most necessarie after his owne conceite And by the advis of suche as him shall like to take advis of for the destruction of oure said souverain lordes ennemyes And for

the recouvrement of his enheritance and confirmacion of the same
 havynge in alle wise upon the fait of the werre And in the Countrees
 Towns Castels and fortresses occupied by the ennemyes withinne the saide
 Roiaume and Duchie And in hem that he shall gete and putte in to oure
 saide souverain lordes obeissance withinne the saide Roiaume and Duchie
 as ample power auctoritee franchise advantage and libertee as ever had
 any other lord of our said souverain lordes blood or of not of his bloode
 that have passed the see in to the perties be for this

Responsio His wey is appoynted and the kyng hath
 granted to kepe it

- xii Item if it fortune the saide Duc to die in oure saide souverain
 lordes service during the tyme that he shall be withholden for for to
 be empeched or lettet by sekenesse or by any other cause agayns his
 wille Wherby that he may not perfourme oure souverain lordes entent in
 his service during the tyme that he shall be withholden fore he desireth
 that neither he his heirs executeurs nor noon of his officers be compelled
 to restore the monneie which he shall receive for the saide services
 Nor noo compt to make therof in any wise delivering into oure saide
 souverain lord or to his Tresorer of Englande the obligacions and
 endentures that the said duc shall take for seurtee of his retinue

Responsio It is graunted as it is desired bryngyng and
 deliveryng the seuretees to the kynges behove to the tresorer of Englande

- xiii Item in case that any of the appointements covenens aggreamentes
 or promesses maad or to be maad betwix oure saide souverain lord and
 the said Duc at this tyme or his power auctoritee franchise avauntage or

of his libertie above saide suche as shall lust the kyng oure said
souverain lord to graunte him at this tyme or of any other thinges of
oure saide souverain lordes grauntes to him maad or to be maad at the
tyme befor his departing oute of this lande in this present voiage that
he is entraited upon be not holden fulfilled and kept unto him ferme
and stable in every pertie of them on oure saide souverain lordes behove
withoute any variance Interupcion contradiction or delaye in England
Fraunce or guyenne in all wise The saide duc desireth to have graunted
to him that it may be lefull to him to retourne into Englande therefor
again with the kynges good lordship withoute any blame to be laied upon
him or upon his heirs and executeurs therfor What so ever inconvenement
that falle in the saide Reaume and Duchy or in any party of hem be cause
of his saide retourne And whether it be upon the point and tyme of his
retourne or after notwithstanding And that he and his heirs and
executeurs may stande quite and discharged utterly of the saide
inconvenement and retourne avenst the kyng and his heirs for ever more

Responsio

It is graunted

xiiiij Item in case that any inconvenient fall unto the saide Reaume of
Fraunce of Duchie of Guyenne or to any other partie of hem during the
tyme of the saide Dukes abydyng there or upon his comyng thens or after
his comyng thens be it when his terme is expired or because of defaute
of paiement after the first half yere shall be ended or for default
of paiement for any money of the latter half yere of his terme like as
more playnly is declared in the endenture maad betwix oure saide
souverain lord and him for this present voiage or be it be bataill
rebellion of the people be traison or in any other maner wise he doyng

allwey his dowie after his appointment and after the power and auctoritee that he hath after his best conceit. The said duc desireth that the saide inconvenient be not layed upon him in any wise but that he and his heirs and executeurs may be and stande utterly discharged and quitte therof avenst the kyng and his heirs for ever more

Responsio

It is graunted

xiv ii Item And to that entent that in the saide voiage the saide Erle may be more obeied of the kyng oure souverain lordes subgettes and dreded of his ennemyes and that it may be thoght amonge hem both that the saide Erle standeth better in the kynges conceit and good grace And to give other ensample in tyme comyng to employe himself with the best will in oure saide souverain lordes service the saide Erle wold desir and besecheth him of his good grace that it myght please his hieghnesse to exhaulte the saide Erle in to the estate of duc And to have that estate to him and to his heirs masles of his body begoten in mariage And at his creation to have his place lymyted and assigned him And that in that estate he may endent with oure saide souverain lorde and have the wages for his own person according unto that estate

Responsio

It is graunted to be Duc of Somerset

iii Item and for to mayntē that estate withalle the saide Erle besecheth unto oure saide souverain lord that it may please unto his hieghnesse and abundant grace to graunte him certain livelode declared in a bill after the tenure of the same whiche the saide Erle wol shewe unto oure saide souverain lorde when it shall please until his highnesse to

take reward therto

Responsio The kyng hath graunted him vj^c marc to him and to his heirs masles of his body lawfully begoten

xv Item And therwith that it may please unto oure said souverain lord of his more plenteuse grace to yeve unto the saide Duc and to his saide heirs the Countee of Alencon to have holde and in all wise and manyers to rejoyse it as he that last called himself Erle therof had it Notwithstanding that it be of the kynges ancien demaine or appliqued thereto Reserved unto oure saide souverain lorde that yif a good pease finalle be maade And that it like unto oure saide souverain lord to yeve him that calleth himself now Duc therof the said Countee agayne be it in name of Duchie or Counte Oure said souverain lord in that case to do therwith as shall please him best. And in case that oure saide souverain lord have maade unto him that now calleth himself duc therof restitution of the saide Countee be it in the name of Duchie or of Counte Whether that it be by that meane of finalle pease And that the saide Countee or Duchie come agayne unto oure saide souverain lordes handes be it be forfeiture or by what so ever other manner way or meen it be That the saide duc may have his prustinate estate in the saide Countie in the same maner as he had befer without any contradiction or impediment of oure saide souverain lord or of his heirs in any tyme for evermore hereafter in the same maner and fourme as in a bill conceived therupon more pleynly is declared

Responsio My said lord knoweth herinne the kynges answer

xvi Item That alle maner processe maade or to be maade ayenst the saide Duc in oure saide souverain lordes Eschequier for aprestes what so ever thei bee wages of werre Receite Relevés Commission maad unto him and to others not retourned ner the extretes therof broght into the eschequier except the sommons of the pipe for yerly service yif any suche be that aught be paied unto oure said souverain lord be putte in respite for the tyme of the said Dukes abyding beyond the see And thereuppon that warrantes be maade undre oure saide souverain lordes prive seal or grete seal as the case shall require from tyme to tyme directed to the Tresorer and Barons to respite the same processe and to successe of makyng of hem during the tyme of the saide Dukes abidyng beyond the see

Responsio It is graunted

xvii Item yif any lordships Manoirs landes tenements holden of the kyng in chief descende Remaine reverte or in any wise falle unto the said Duc befor his comyng agayn into Englande that after the inquisicion therof retourned in to the Chancerrie in fourme accustomed. The saide Duc may have liverie of hem at the suite of on of his attorneis generall be for his homage doon unto oure saide souverain lorde yif any there be due therfor And that the saide homage and all processes to be maad therfor to be respited unto the saide Dukes comyng agayn unto Englande withoute fyne makyng for the saide Respite

Responsio It is graunted

xviii Item for asmoche as the saide duc is enherited in a m^l li to be taken yerely oute of oure saide souverain lordes Eschequier and upon the petit custume of the Port of London Wherof partie us yit unpaid

unto the said Duc The saide Duc besecheth unto oure saide souverain lord that it may please unto his gode grace to shewe the saide Duc so gode lordship that he may have redy payement as well of that that is due to him therof nowe as of that that may be due to him thereof as he departe. And in the same wise that he may have redy payement of all that shall be due to him therof. When the termes of paiement comen therof during the tyme of his abyding beyond the see Considered the greete charges that he must bere and sustene in this voiage and to prepare him therto

Responsio My lord the tresorer of Englande shall have good warrauntes for paiementes and assignments on his behalaf and to have him be recomended in the best wise that can be

xix Item yiff it be so that there be any relief by the saide Duc due unto our saide souverain lord befor the departing of the saide Duc in this present voiage and that he hath lost or shall lose any issues therfore as for defaulte of any homage doying or for any other cause befor his saide departing The saide Duke besecheth unto oure saide souverain lord that it may please to his abundante grace to pardon him of the said reliefes and issues and of all fynes and audeamentes that oure saide souverain lorde may aske him in Englande or in Weles unto the tyme of his saide departing

Responsio The king hath graunted to him a generall pardon for that is passed and for that tyme to come to his retourne alle processes to be respited ayenst him

xx Item and that the saide Duc may have of oure saide souverain Lord a proteccion for the tyme of his abyding beyonde the sea in case of his livelode such as shall be thoght by the saide Dukes counsail that oure saide souverain Lord may yeve lawefully

Responsio It is graunted

xxj Item the saide Duc desireth that he may have as many letters undre oure saide souverain lordes greet and prive seals as shall be thoght to him and to his counsail in any wise necessarie or expedient upon every of thees Articles above rehersed withoute any difficultee to be maad in any wise theragayn

Responsio It is fitting that he hath it and graunted

xxii Item sithen the saide Dukes Brother of Dorset may not have his letters of oure saide souverain lordes graunte to him maade of the countee of Maine sealed in ffraunce for suche causes as hath be laide and saide theragayn by oure saide souverain Lordes Councaill there. The saide Duc desireth that it myght please to our saide souverain lordes good grace to graunt unto the saide Duc that yif it lust unto oure saide souverain lorde to make any other maner of graunte as gift of the saide Countee of newe unto the saide Dukes Brother or to any other that allwey may be reserved in the saide gifte that the saide Duc shall have the terme of vij yere That hath liked to oure saide souverain Lorde to graunte unto the saide Duc in the governaunce therof When the tyme and terme comen therof

Responsio It is graunted an act to be maad herof and that Garter have an Article in his credence in the fourme desired

xxiij Item the saide duc besecheth unto oure saide souverain Lord that
it may please of his good grace to graunte unto the saide Duc that he
may have all thees articles exemplified undre oure said souverain
lordes gret seal with such answers as shall please unto his saide
grace to geve therto

Responsio

It is graunted

APPENDIX THREE : the payment of Edmund duke of Somerset's
war-time salary

The payment of the war-time salary of £20,000 of the king's lieutenant of France and Normandy had fallen into considerable arrears during York's terms of office. On York's return to England in 1445 he had been owed no less than £38,666 13s 4d, of which he had waived the sum of £12,666 13s 4d to secure the balance on assignment.⁽¹⁾ The duke of Buckingham encountered similar problems during his captaincy of Calais; on resigning the post in 1450 the arrears of wages amounted to some £19,395.⁽²⁾ Since Edmund duke of Somerset had no comparable landed wealth in England to support such a charge, and was faced with an outbreak of war with France in July 1449, the proper payment of this salary was obviously of vital importance. On this subject various statements have been offered. E.F. Jacob, The Fifteenth Century, 488-89, reported that nothing was received at all: 'War was not officially re-opened until the beginning of August 1449, when the exchequer made payments to captains embarking from England, but no payment of the £20,000 to the king's lieutenant can be traced'. More recently R.A. Griffiths, Henry VI, 519, cited the figure of £13,277 delivered of Somerset's wages as an indication that the duke was facing considerable difficulty in paying his troops by December 1449.

In fact the English government was to make a determined effort to raise the full amount. Lacking ready cash, it had to secure money by a series of loans (principally from members of the council and the executors

(1) P. Johnson, thesis cit., 96-99.

(2) C. Rawcliffe, The Staffords, 20-21.

of Cardinal Beaufort) and pledging crown jewels. Despite these difficult circumstances most of the sum was paid out by one means or another. All document references which follow are from the Public Record Office: Issue Rolls.

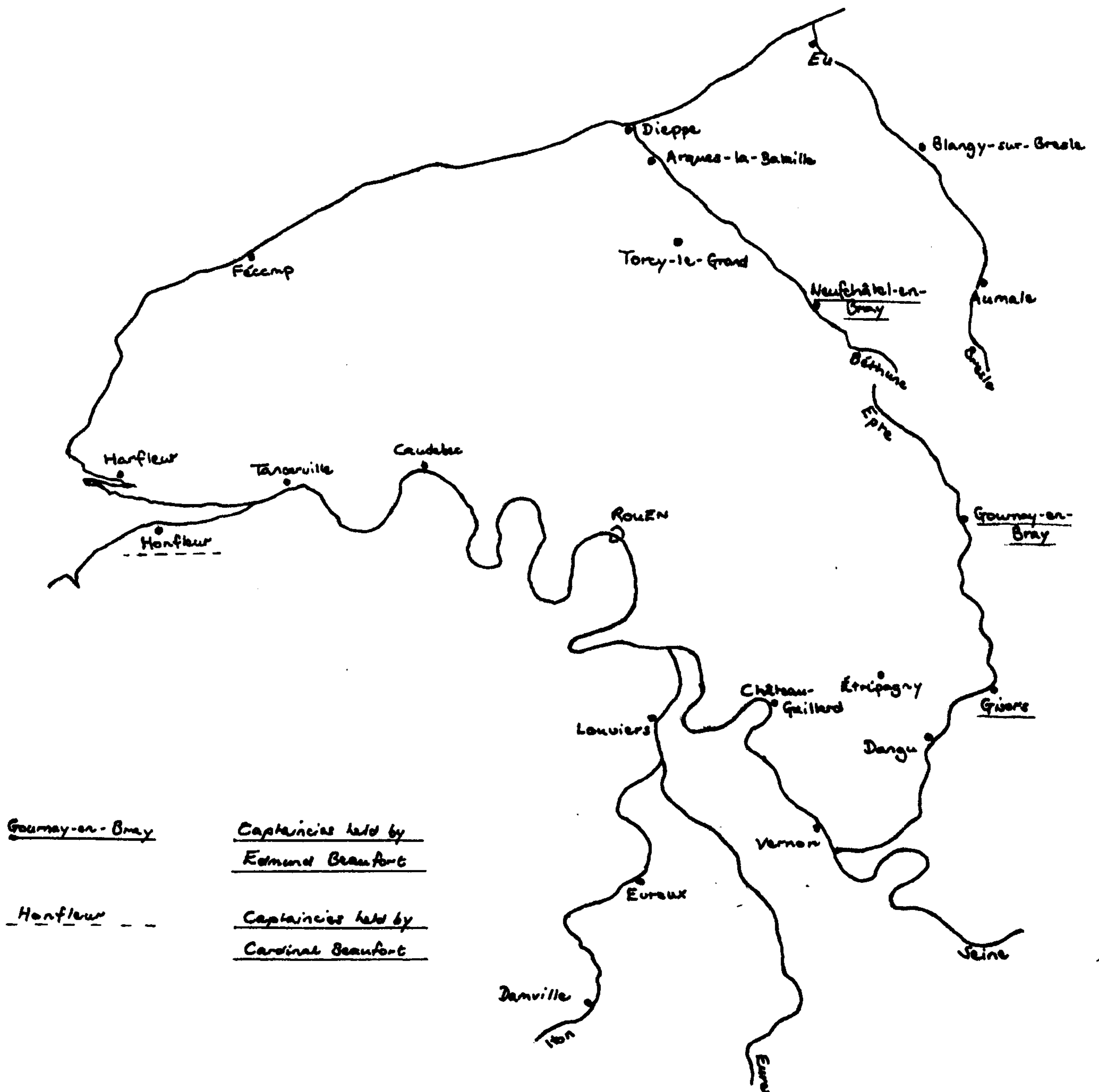
At the outbreak of war Somerset had already been advanced £4,382 13s 9d of his governor's allowance. It had been delivered in two payments, £1,882 13s 9d on 1 February 1447, and £2,500 on 20 February 1448 (E403/765, 769). Both sums were for the wages of troops where the indentures had subsequently been cancelled; Somerset was allowed to keep the cash, to be deducted from his salary if hostilities were to recommence.

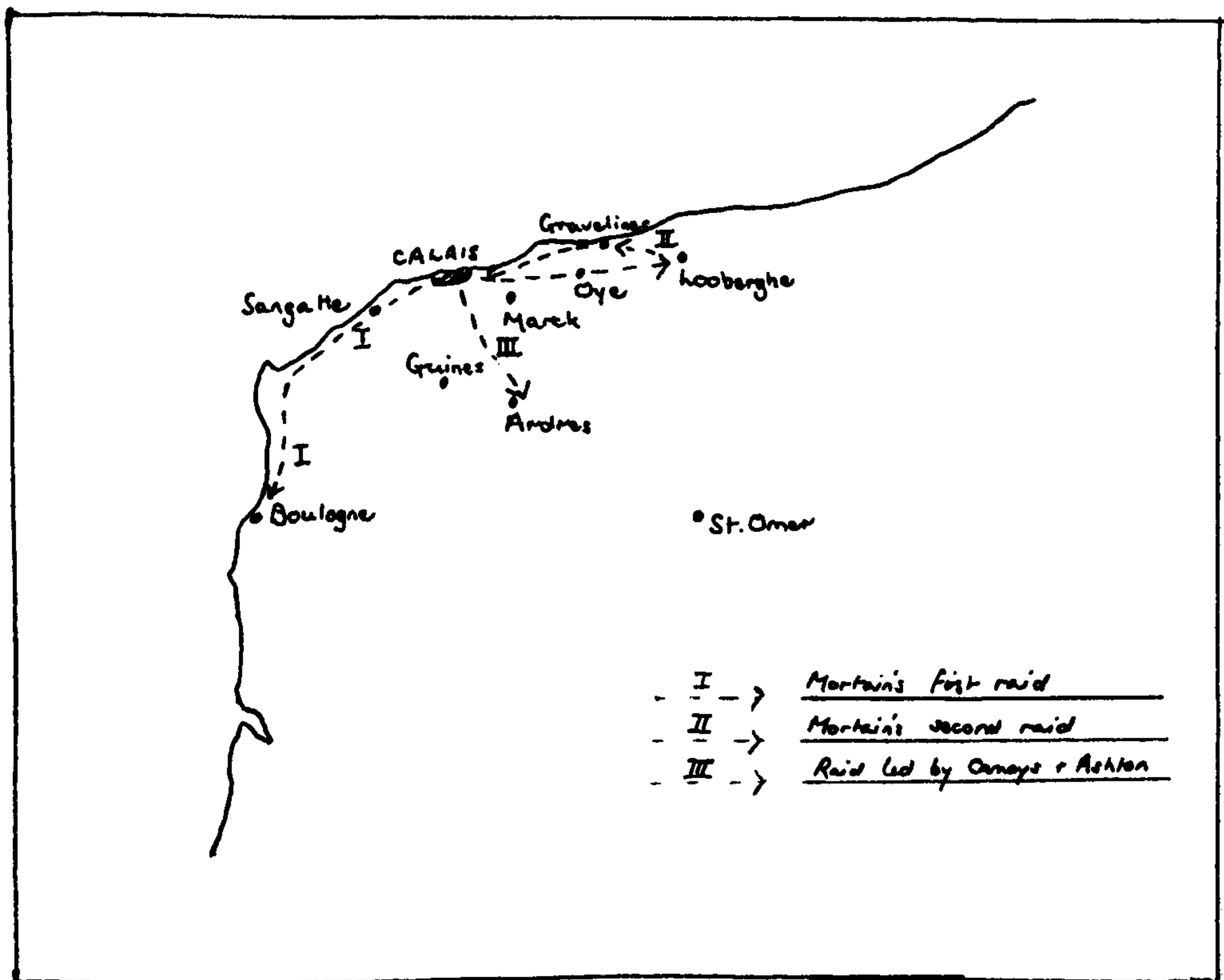
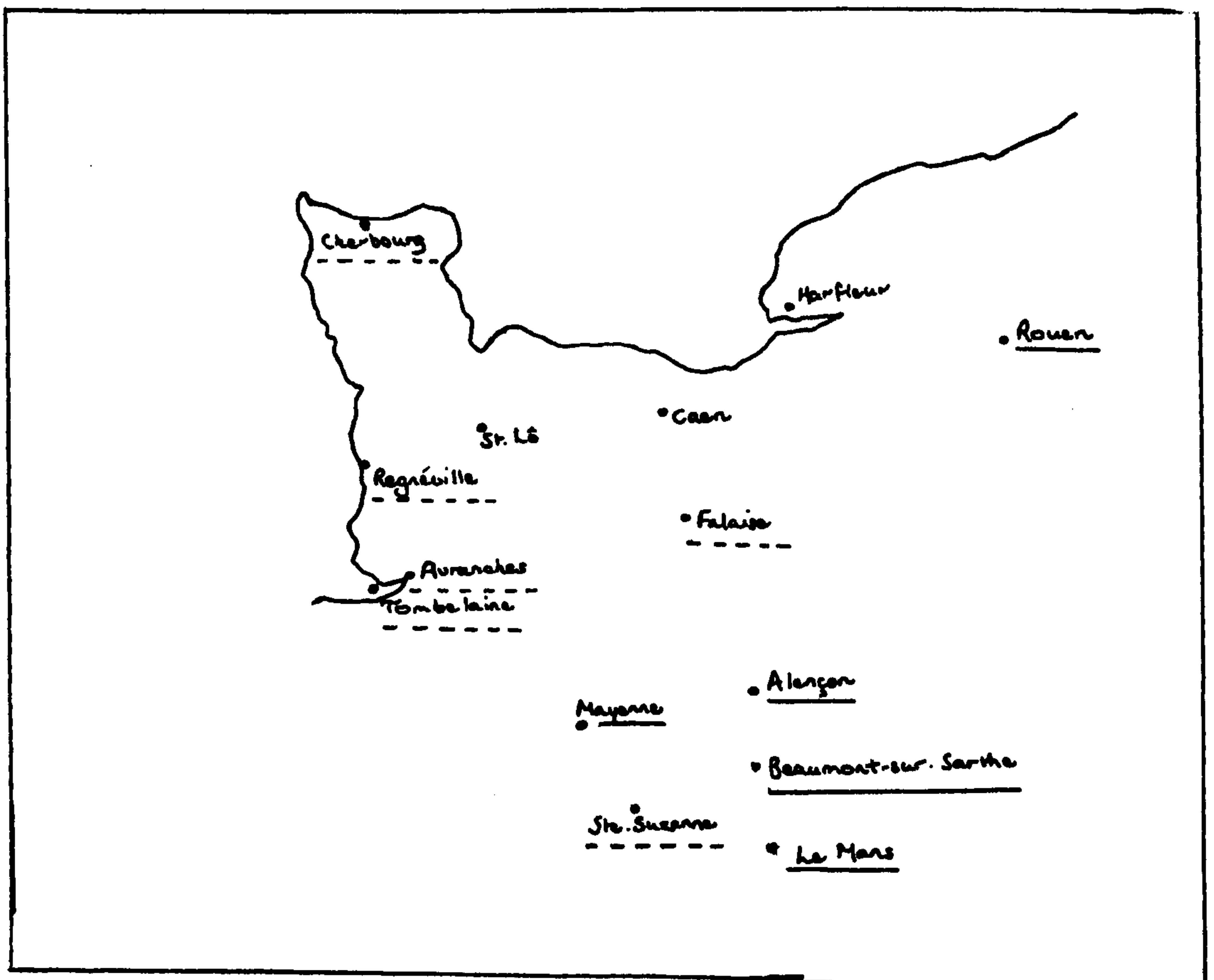
On 29 July 1449, when war had been declared by the French and small reinforcements were about to sail from Winchelsea to supplement Somerset's own retinue, two fresh payments were made: £326 13s 4d and the more substantial £1,750, the latter being raised entirely from contributions from the council (Suffolk lending £1,000), in total £2,077 6s 8d (E403/775). On 28 August two new allocations were made, a paltry £20 from the ready cash of the treasury and a large contribution from the executors of Cardinal Beaufort of £2,043 6s 8d, in total £2,063 6s 8d (*ibid.*). On 22 September another payment was made, consisting entirely of loans from councillors. Unfortunately the end of the membrane is mutilated and it is not possible to ascertain the full amount that Somerset received (the corresponding pell roll comes to an end before this date). Eight contributions can be read from the roll, all small sums, totalling £523 (*ibid.*).

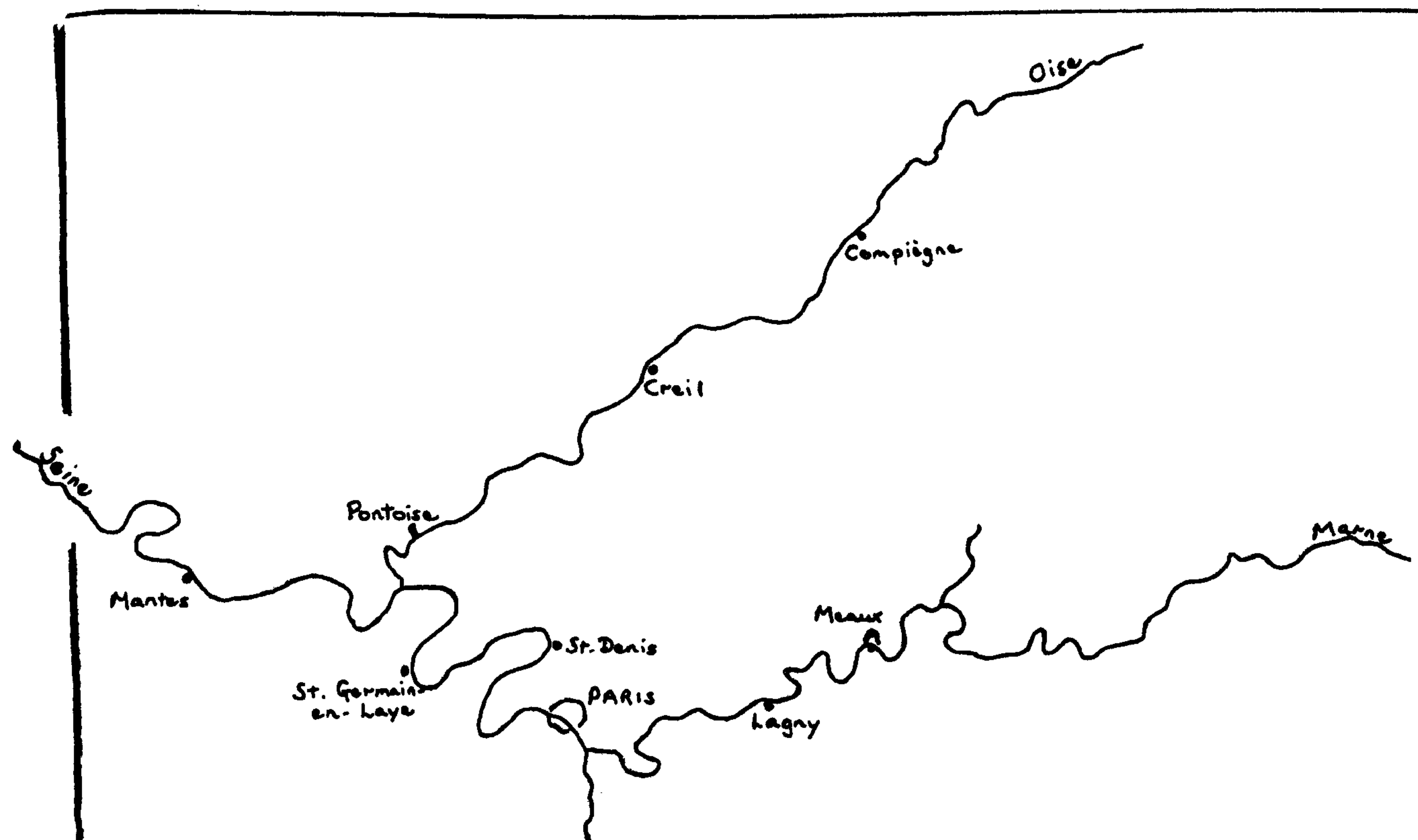
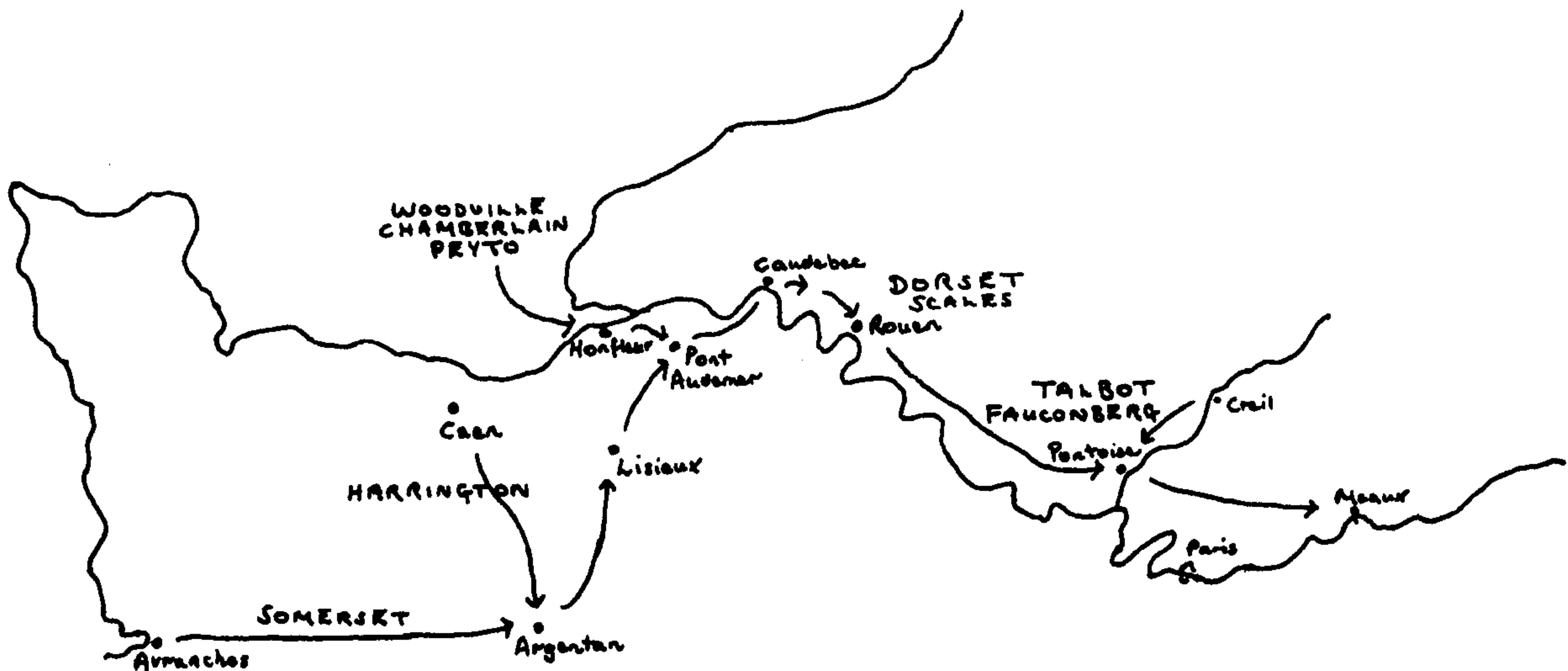
No new allocation was made until 28 November 1449 when £100 was found from treasury revenue (E403/777). On 11 December a very large payment was made, consisting both of contributions from councillors (including 5,000 marks from the executors of Cardinal Beaufort and £1,773 5s 8d from Suffolk) and pledged royal jewels, totalling no less than £8,416 12s 4d (ibid.). On 31 March 1450 two final payments were made, £133 6s 8d from the treasury's revenue and £450 in loans from the council, totalling £583 6s 8d (ibid.). In all £13,763 12s 4d had been found for Somerset since the declaration of war, and with some uncertainty over the payment made on 22 September 1449 the figure may well have been slightly higher. Combined with the £4,382 13s 9d received by Edmund prior to the outbreak of war, he had been paid in all at least £18,174 2s 1d of his war-time salary of £20,000. The shortfall in payment was not a serious one, and the difficulties facing Somerset in the payment of his troops in December 1449 were rather a product of the loss of the Norman Chambre des comptes with the surrender of Rouen and the breakdown of the fiscal administration of the duchy. Overall, in view of the financial difficulties of the English government, who were to receive no new allocation for the defence of Normandy from the parliament of May 1449, it was remarkable that most of the salary was raised.

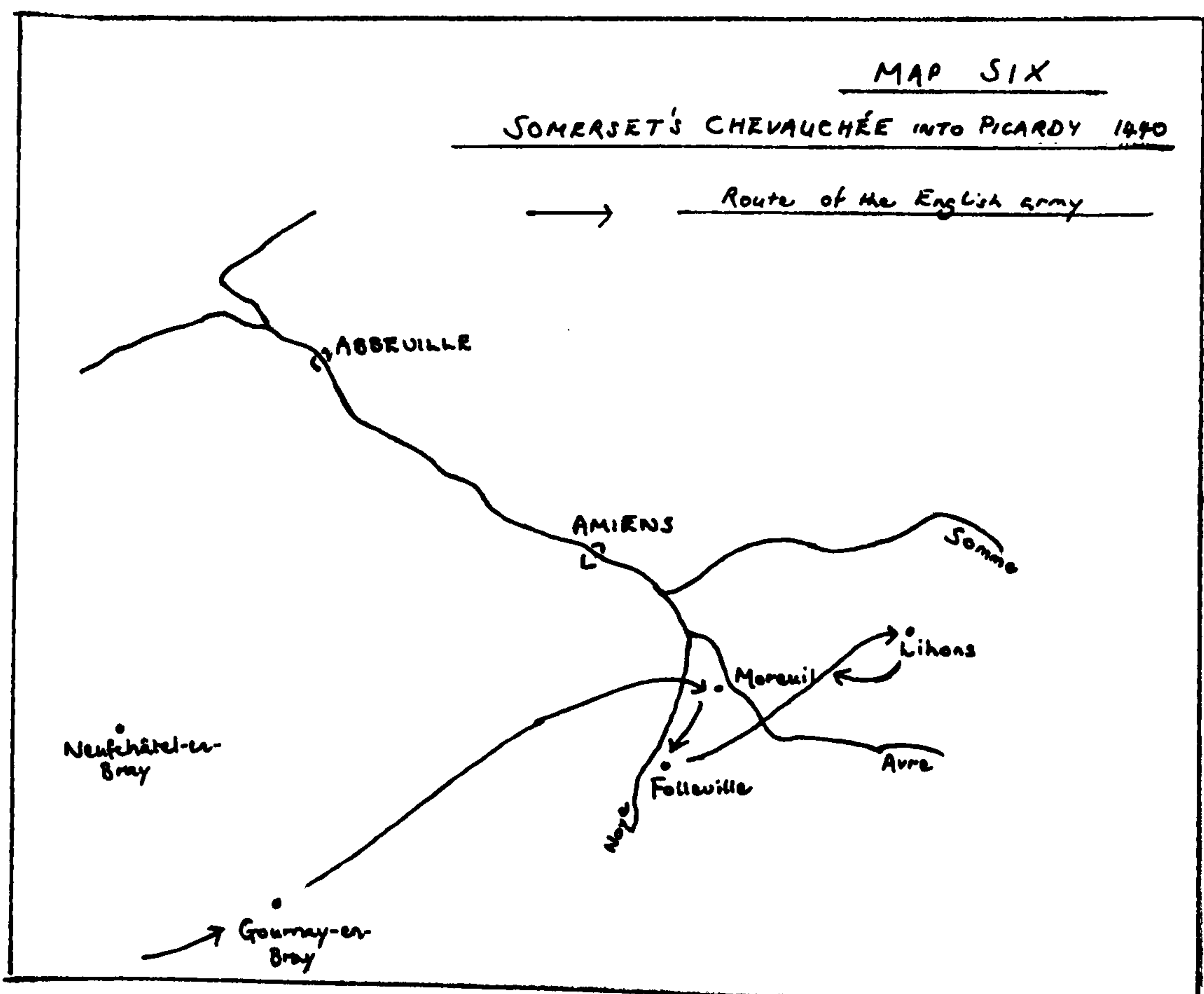
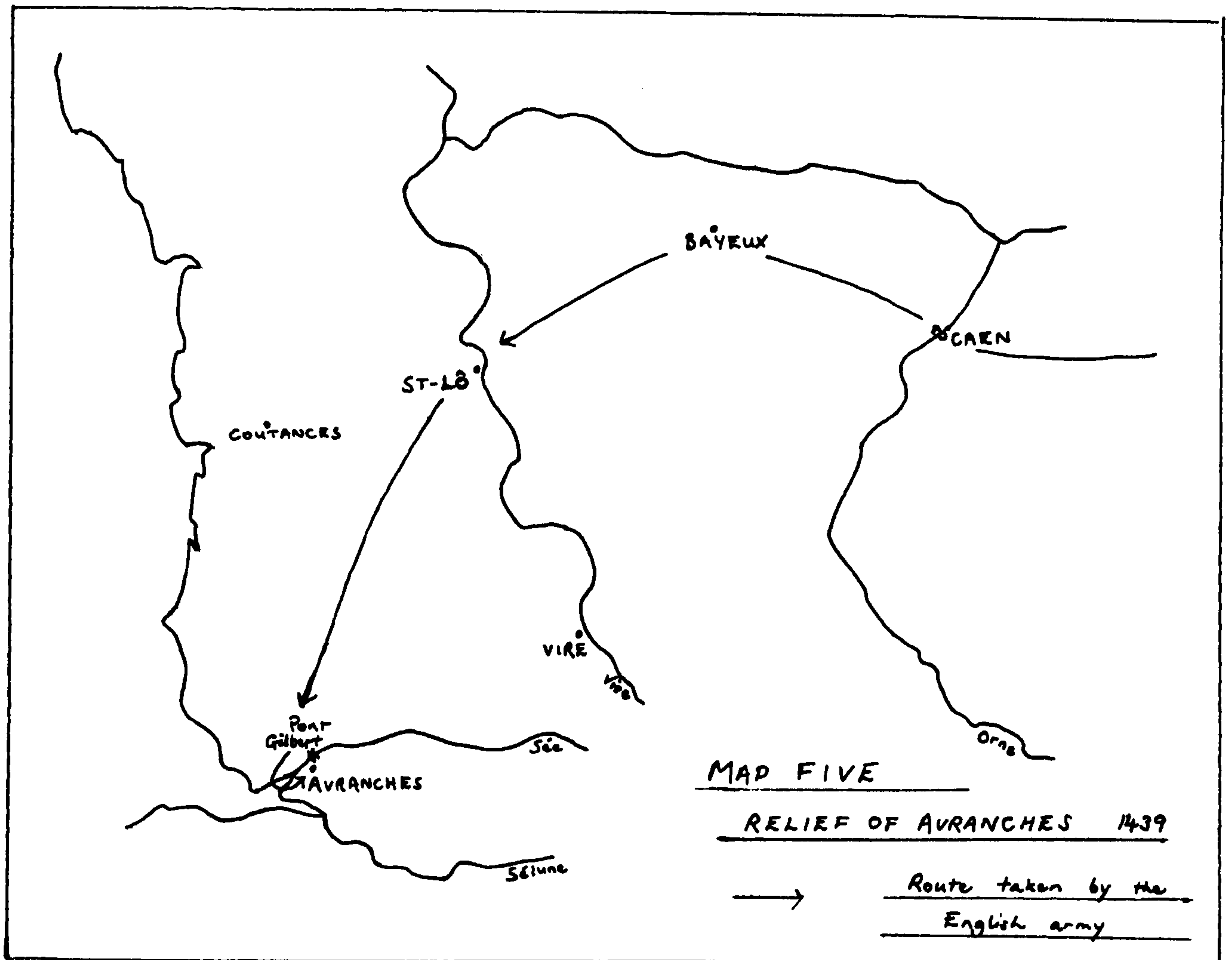
MAP ONE

THE MILITARY CAMPAIGNS OF 1429-31



MAP TWOCALAIS 1436MAP THREEBEAUFORT CAPTAINCIES 1439CherbourgHeld by John Beaufort, earl of SomersetAlençonHeld by Edmund Beaufort, earl of Dorset

MAP FOURRELIEF OF MEAUX 1439GATHERING THE RELIEF ARMY JULY-AUGUST 1439



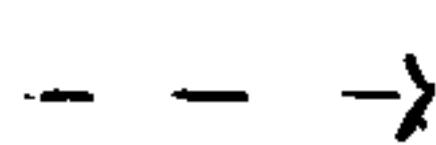
MAP SEVEN

THE SIEGE OF HARFLEUR 1440

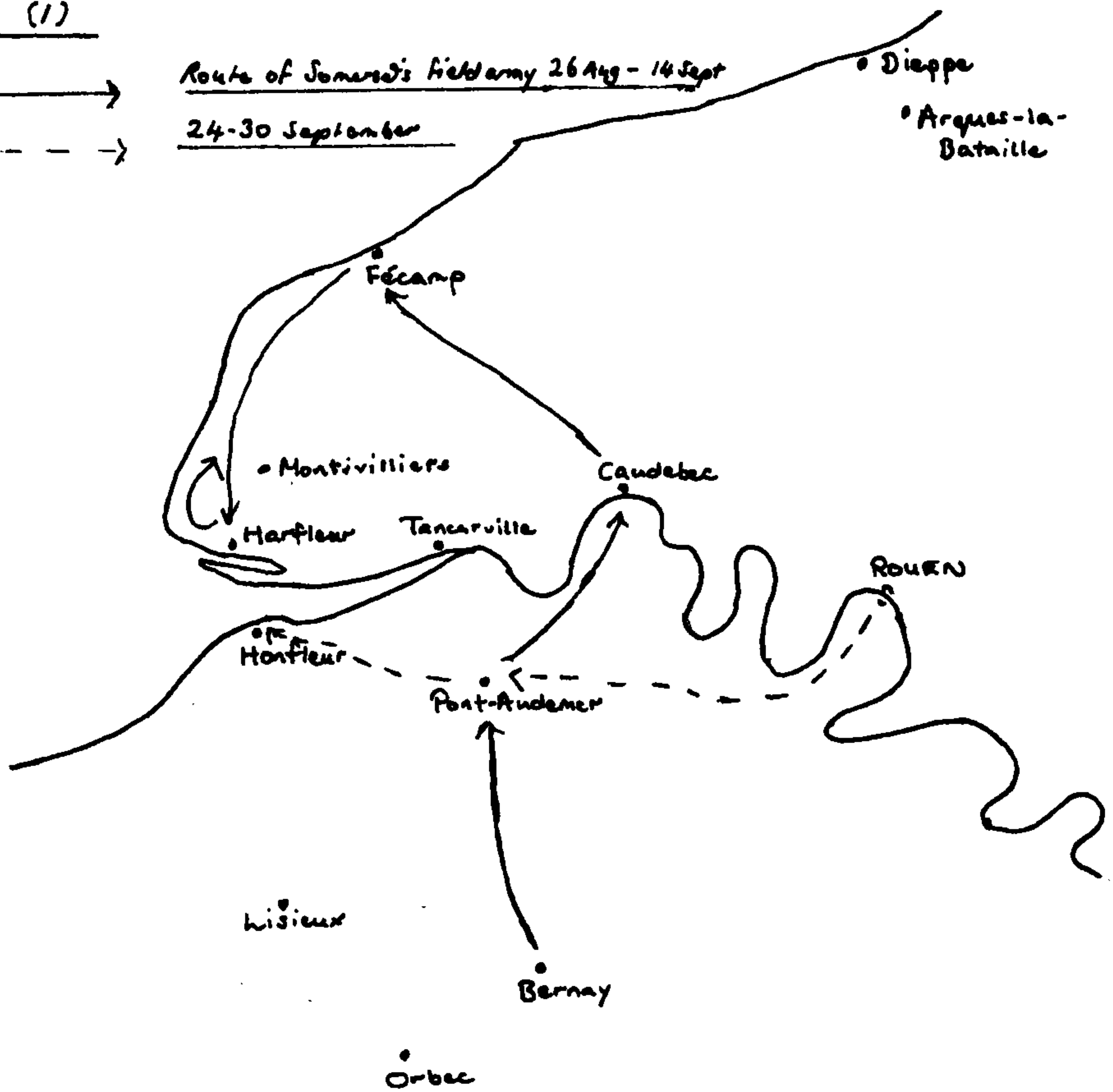
(i)



Route of Somerset's field army 26 Aug - 14 Sept



24-30 September

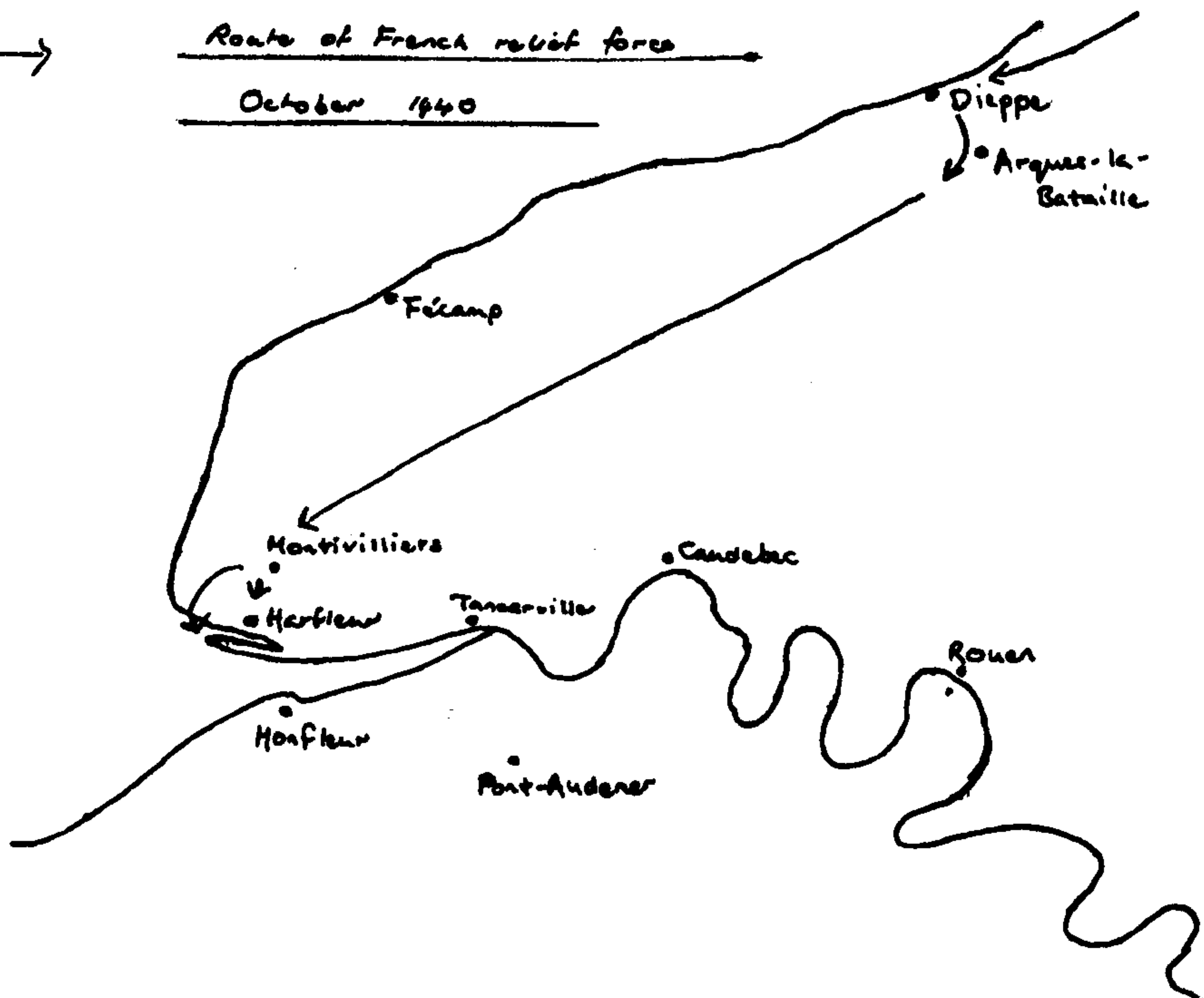


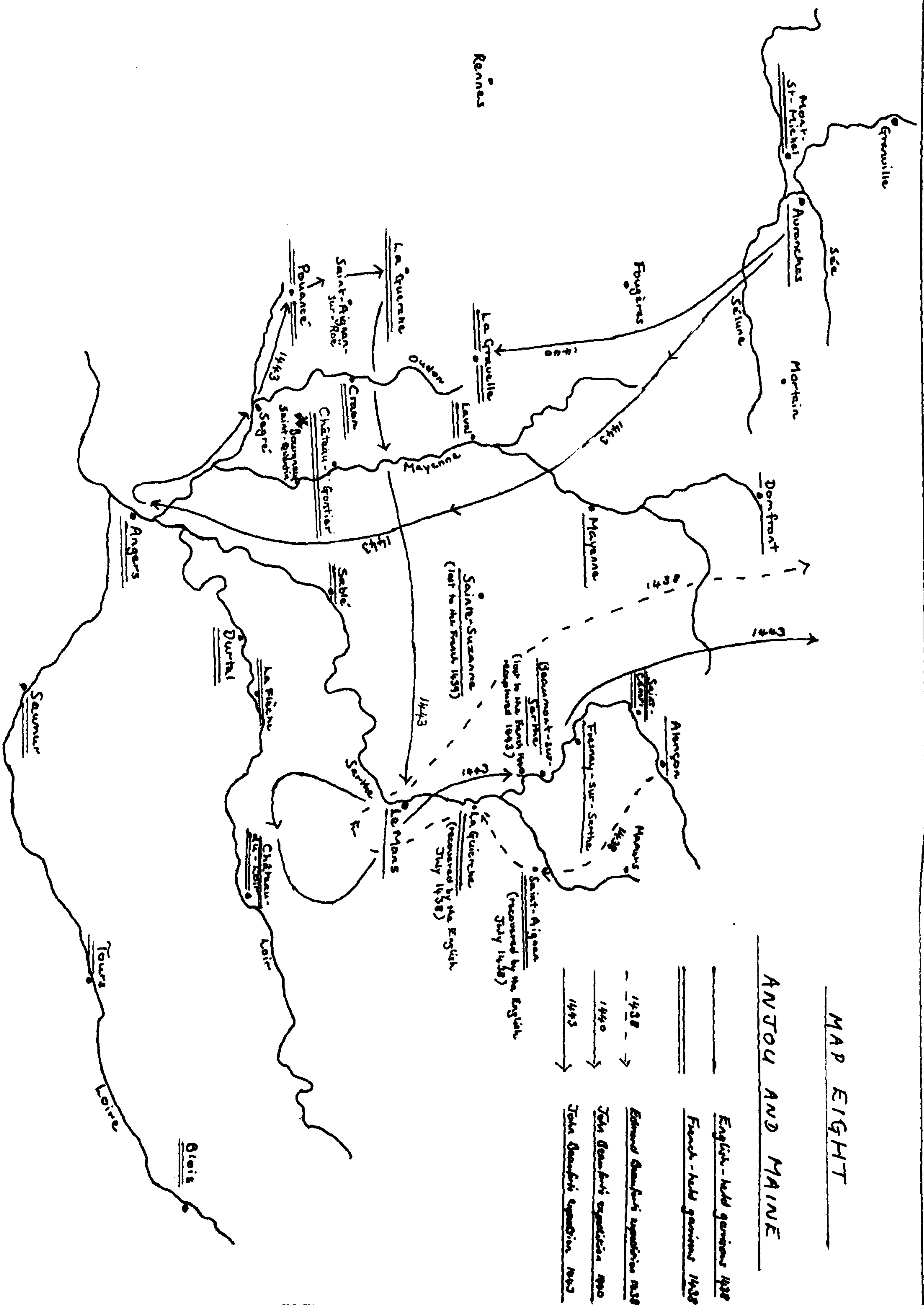
(ii)

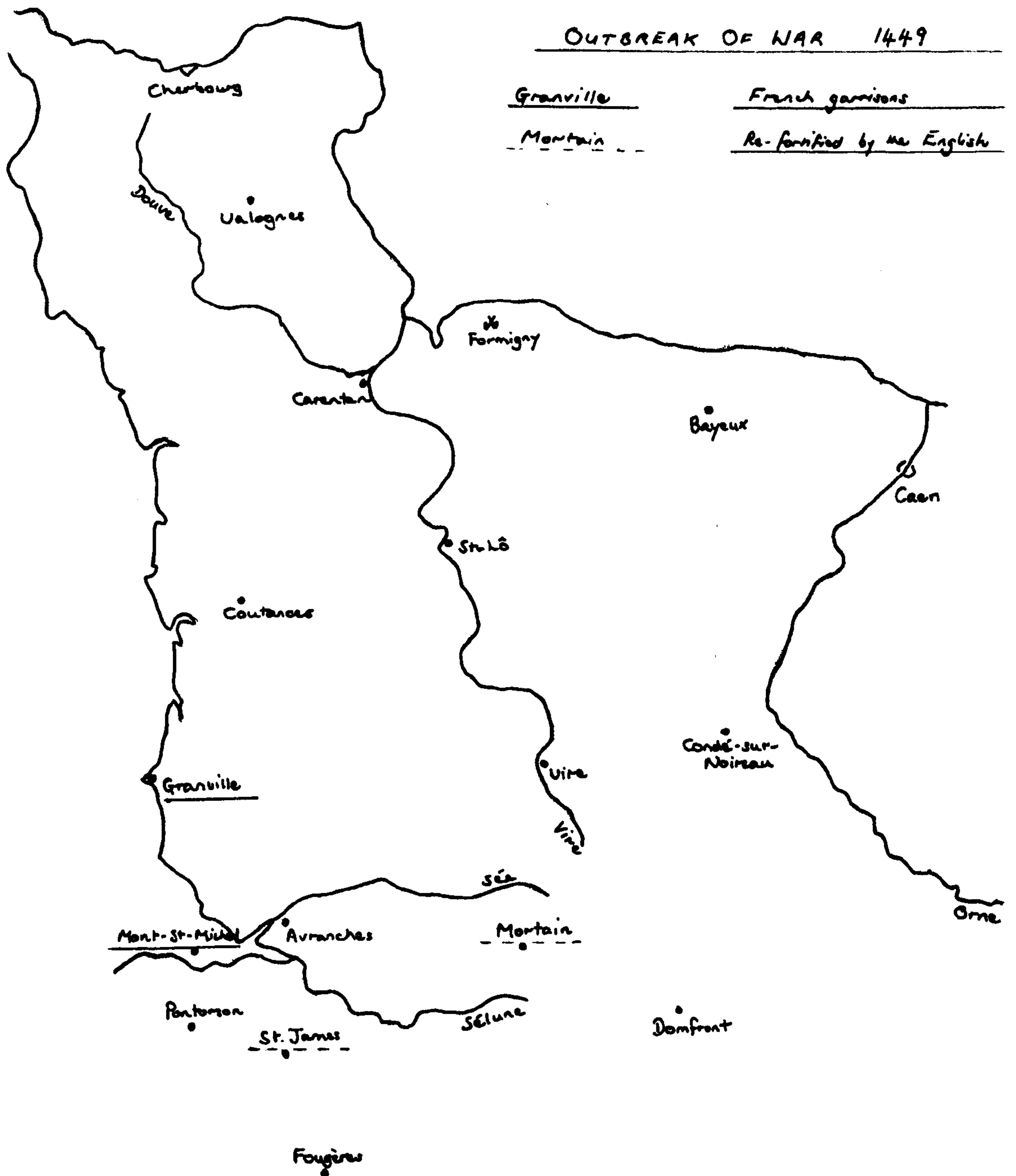


Route of French relief force

October 1440

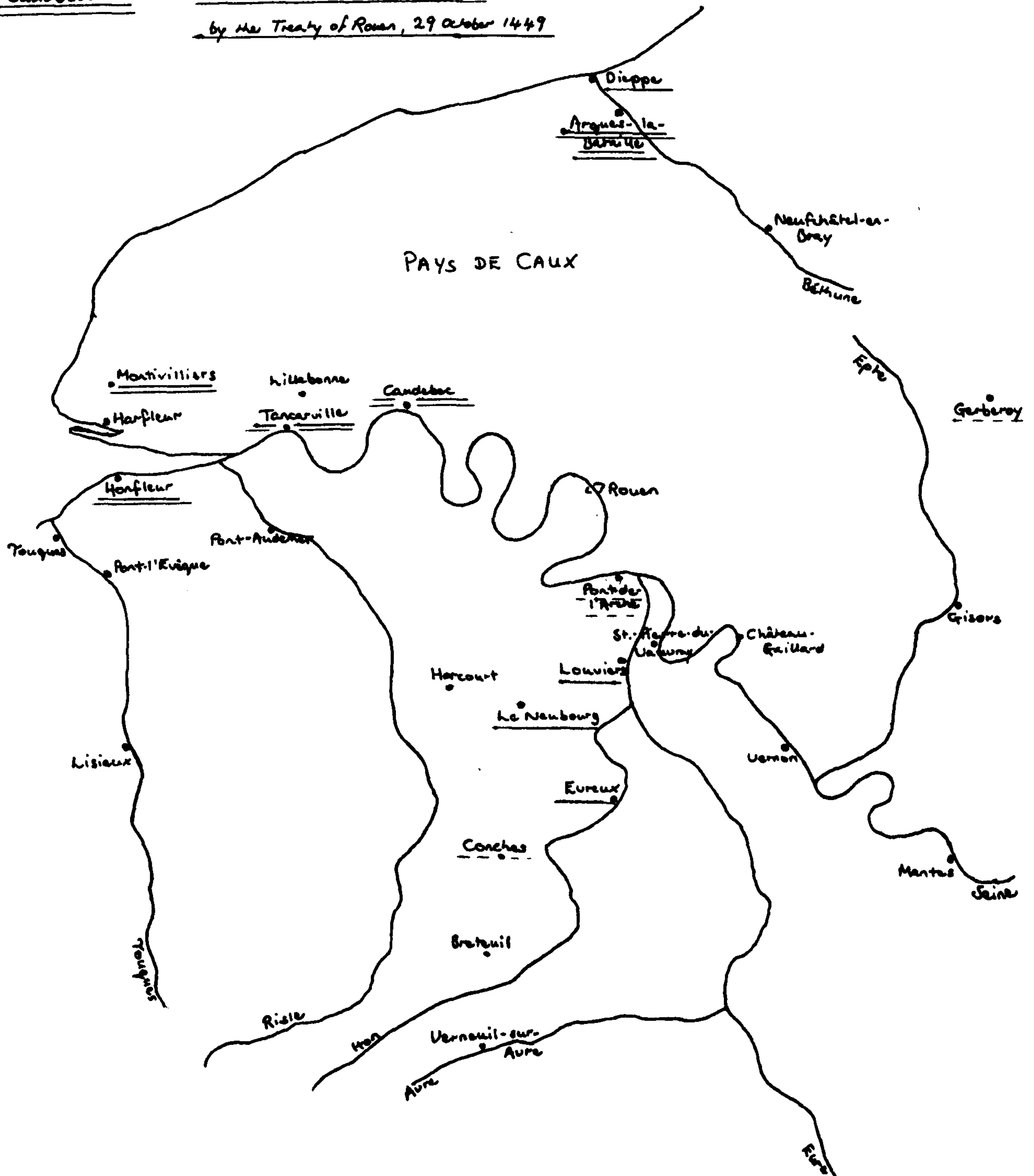




MAP NINEWESTERN NORMANDY AT THEOUTBREAK OF WAR 1449GranvilleFrench garrisonsMontainRe-fortified by the English

MAP TENEASTERN NORMANDY AT THE OUTBREAK OF WAR 1449

<u>Dieppe</u>	<u>French garrisons</u>
<u>Conchas</u>	<u>Occupied by the French May 1449</u>
<u>Candebec</u>	<u>Towns surrendered to the French</u>
	<u>by the Treaty of Rouen, 29 October 1449</u>

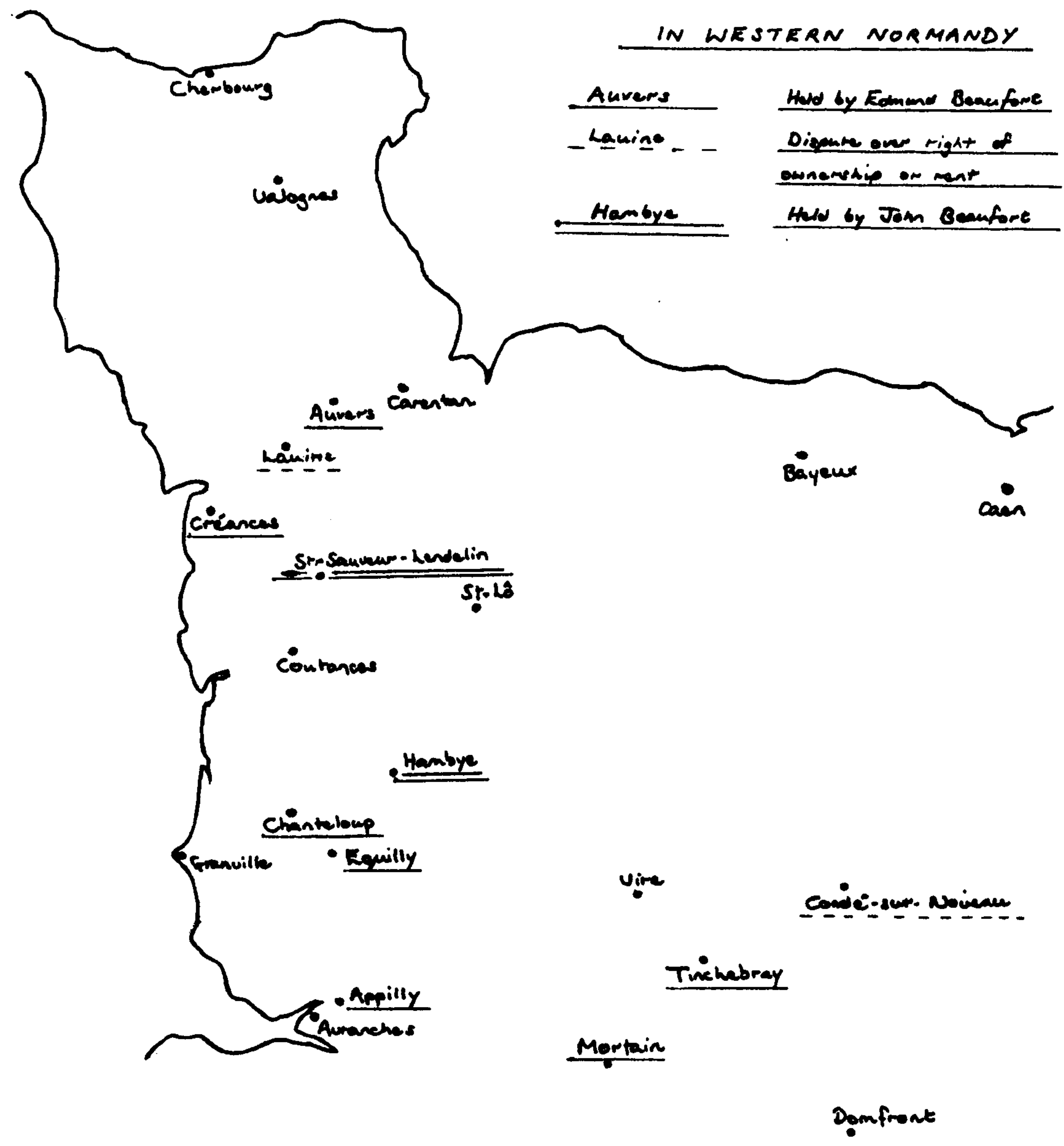


MAP ELEVEN

LORDSHIPS HELD BY THE BEAUFORTS

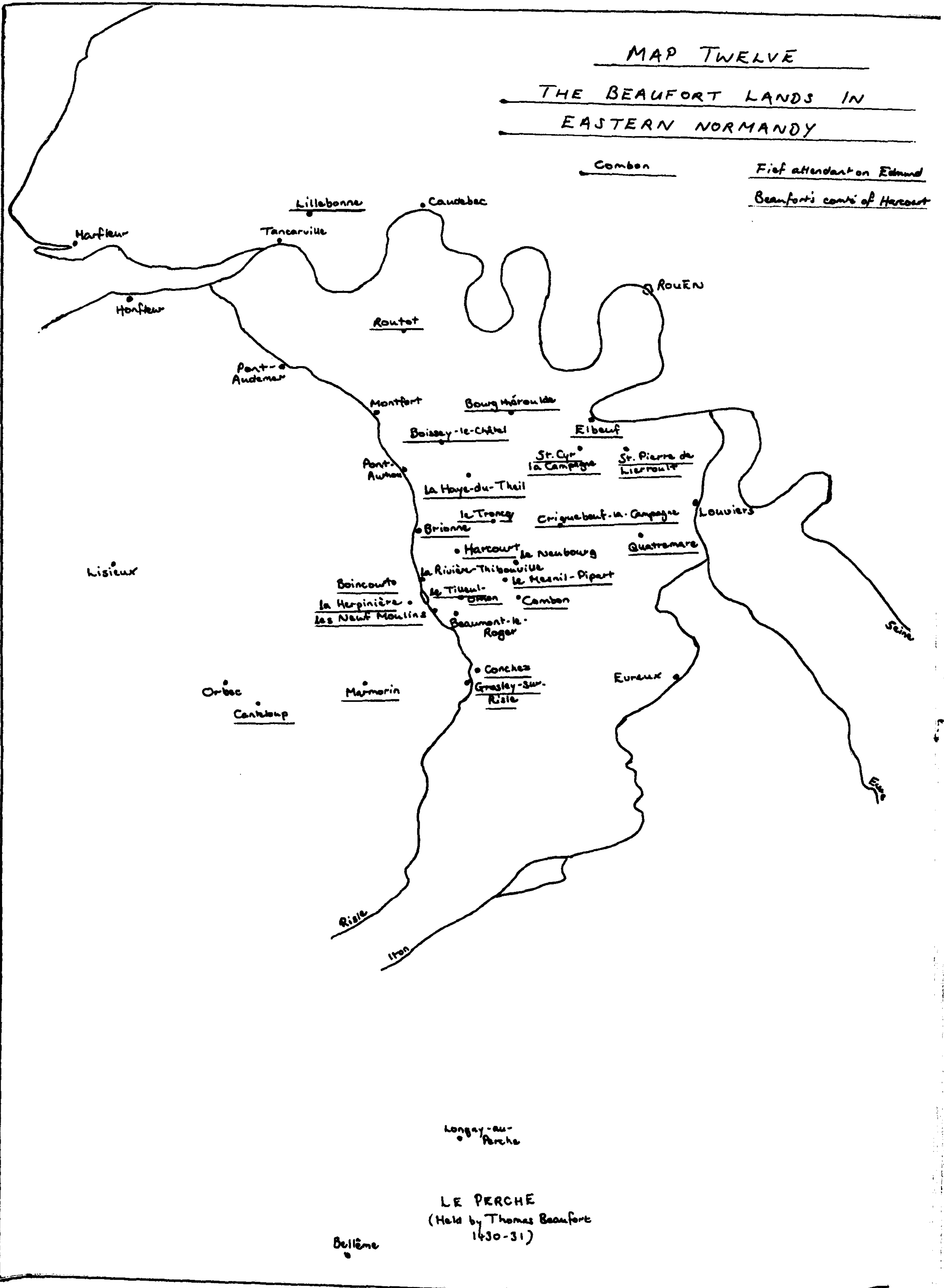
IN WESTERN NORMANDY

<u>Auvers</u>	<u>Held by Edmund Beaufort</u>
<u>Lanion</u>	<u>Dispute over right of ownership or rent</u>
<u>Hambye</u>	<u>Held by John Beaufort</u>



MAP TWELVE

THE BEAUFORT LANDS IN EASTERN NORMANDY



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BB 3, 5 (Délibérations de la ville)

CC 21, 23, 24 (Comptes de la ville)

Angers

CC 4

Evreux

CC 10, 11

These classes, which do not consist of registers of accounts but bundles of individual quittances, are in the process of being reclassified in two large dossiers, CC 1 (1398-1428) and CC 2 (1431-54)

Lisieux

CC 1 Registers 3, 10, 17

A number of the registers have gone missing but a detailed handwritten inventory is now kept at the Archives Départementales du Calvados, 'Les comptes de la ville de Lisieux pendant l'occupation anglaise', compiled by A. Bénet in 1902

Mantes

BB 5

CC 28

Rouen

A 7 (Registre de Délibérations 1447-53)

Tours

BB 16, 18

CC 27, 29

Archives DépartementalesCalvados

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Loire-Atlantique

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Nord

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H305

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 JJ 173
 K 59, 63-68, 72
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 X^{1a} 4796, 4821

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 27, 28, 29, 42, 43, 74, 75

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Le Mans	Ms. 163
Reims	Collection Tarbé, Carton V
Rouen	Ms. Y 134

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British Library

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Additional Mss. 11509, 11542, 21359, 23938, 35814

Birch Ms. 4101

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	28	(Council Records)
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	122	(Customs Accounts)
	149	(Inquisitions Post Mortem)
	159	(Memoranda Rolls)
	163	(Miscellaneous)
	199	(Sheriffs Accounts)
	202	(Writs to sheriffs and other officials)
	326	(Ancient Deeds)
	364	(Foreign Accounts)
	401	(Receipt Rolls)
	403	(Issue Rolls)
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I am also grateful to the Henry Huntingdon Library and Pierpont Morgan Library, USA, for sending me photocopies of documents in their collection and to Mrs. J. Lloyd, for making available a photocopy of part of the records of the dean and chapter of Canterbury; also to Miss A. Sinclair for providing me with manuscript references from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

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